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World Review

Incorporating Review of Reviews

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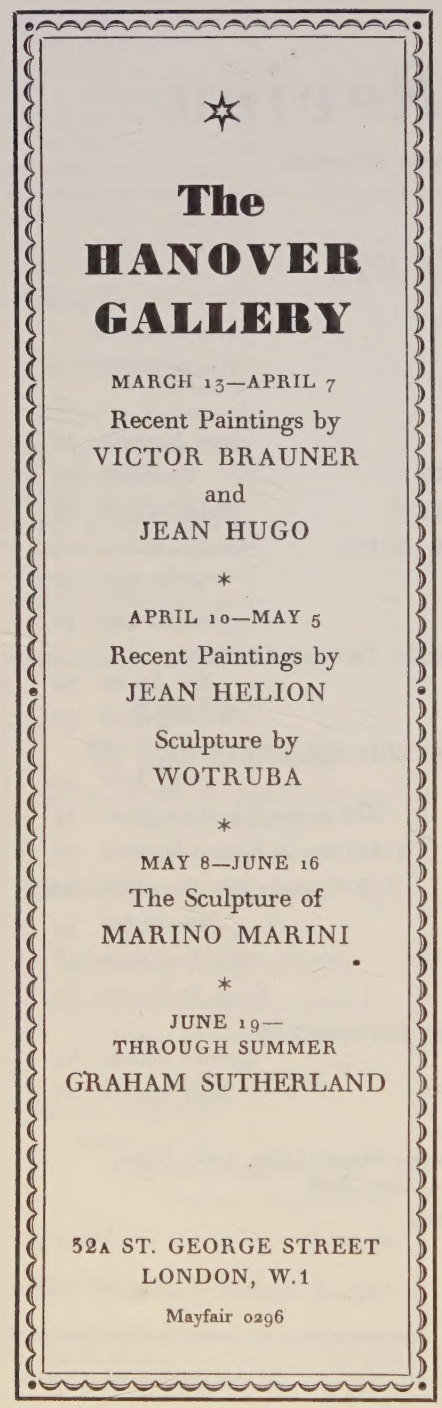
Max Beloff; Eric Newton; Hugo Manning; Maurice Collis; Louis Adeane; C. M. Woodhouse; Stevie Smith

POEMS: by *Edward Daly; Rocco Scotellaro*



LETTERS AND POINTS

'VIEW OF DELFT'

From H. Percy Marshall:

Bertram Nicholls in his article on the above painting, p. 65 of the February 1951 issue of *World Review*, states that 'the two principal foreground figures are vitally important.' Vermeer must have held that view too, inasmuch as, apparently, he took the trouble to paint out another figure which was nearer the centre foreground. Traces of the original figure can be discerned in your reproduction.

The question arises—did Vermeer, in his original painting, place three principal figures in the foreground, or, realising that one central figure only lessened the vitality of the picture, paint it out and replace it by the two decentralised figures?

Mr. Bertram Nicholls replies:

The answer can only be a speculative one. Such pentimenti are fairly common, and as a rule the only deduction to be drawn from them is that at some stage the artist changed his mind. But even if the obliterated figure did not prove the point, we could safely assume that Vermeer did not conceive his picture in its entirety before he began to paint. He would know that he had to do something with figures in the foreground, but he would be unlikely to put them in until he had established the foreground and water in relationship to the whole.

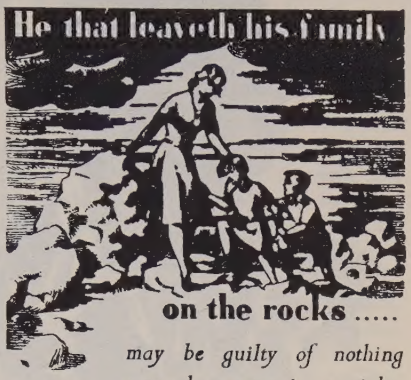
He must have been only human, though it scarcely seems so; and with his deliberate manner of working, he must from time to time have got the picture in his eye. He must have experienced an illusion that besets the deliberate artist—the illusion that something done at the fag end of a morning is marvellous—and the subsequent disillusion when a fresh eye sees that it is all a mistake. The obliterated figure may well have been tried in such a moment of aberration, for it is ill placed. And I will hazard a guess (it can be no more) that it was put in *before* the two all-important figures further to the left, my reason being that, if he had once got those two figures in, he must have known that the thing

was dead right. And, however tired his eye (and at that moment his eye wasn't tired), he wouldn't have gone monkeying about with a third figure.

FASHIONS IN TASTE

From J. J. Curle:

It is a long time since I met anything so delightfully infuriating as your Guide to Fashions in Taste. The questions rise like foam to my lips so that I hardly know which to ask first—how do you decide on an arbiter (the 'fashionable set'?—and if so when does the centre of gravity change from the 'gay-timers' to 'the Bloomsbury intellectual' to—presumably—the editorial board of *Horizon*?—and where, oh where, is it now—with the middle-aged 'young gentlemen' of the third programme?) A shade deeper—is it the taste that people profess or the taste they indulge? (Presumably Picassos of early Cubist days were still buyable by people of moderate incomes, yet I have never seen one in a room—nor even a reproduction of one.) Then, again, when you list Stravinsky as the 'immovable rock' of music; surely even in terms of 'fashionable' appreciation there was a period when he led a modern wing and a period when he merely followed (however brilliantly) a classical revival? Would it not be fair to list his name for the 'twenties and possibly the 'thirties but to replace it by 'revival of Purcell, Rameau, etc.' in the forties? Then Bach and Mozart—surely they have remained, with Velasquez, fashionable as well as fixed values? Beethoven, too, has surely had a 'posthumous quartet era' (though as in Stravinsky's case those who have approved one portion of his output have been those who chiefly derided the rest)? Shakespeare and Rembrandt, I admit, have never been 'the thing' in this age, but surely Mallarmé has been almost as much a name to conjure with as Stravinsky, and Proust has been good for an invitation to 'such a delightful-brilliant-critical party' for far more than one decade in the century? Lamb has never in this century been fashionable, therefore (such being the way of fashion) it is hardly possible that he has been unfashionable. (As a sound maxim it can be asserted that



may be guilty of nothing more than a tragic oversight. He may jeopardize the FUTURE of himself and his family through FAILURE TO INSURE.

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no-one taught as an essayist in the lower forms of a Public School can ever again be either fashionable or unfashionable.)

Rather more seriously, I should have thought Britten had 'arrived' in the 'forties and that Goya and Paul Nash were worthy of mention in the 'thirties as focal points. Manet also surely outlasted by a decade at least the other Impressionists as *avant-garde*. Constable must have been in disgrace with a very narrow circle—the news never reached me even in rumour form.

Finally, as I've chopped at your neck, I will stick my own out by predicting a return of Milhaud and a flowering of Jean Francaix and a boom in Ensor.

END WITHOUT WORLD

From Chris Massie:

Your reflection on the mien and behaviour of people in trains and buses, on the foot-walk and in shops, as being insane, has made me think. Don't you mean stupid, a people stunned into half-baked ineptitude at finding themselves living in the atomic age, and whose religious conception has suddenly been changed from world without end to a possible end without world?

BOYD HOUGHTON

A short time ago I wrote to the *Times Literary Supplement* and other papers to ask for information about the life of Arthur Boyd Houghton, the greatest, I think, of the illustrators of the 'sixties. I have received many letters of great interest and help to me, and am very grateful to all those people who clearly went to considerable trouble to look up references to Houghton in old magazines. I still, however, have only a very general knowledge of Houghton's life (as opposed to his work), and would be very glad of any more information.

PRINCE TISSY

I am gratified by the interest shown in Prince Tissy, his progress and welfare. When I get another letter from the Chamberlain, I will print it. There have been strange developments in Tisshara.

Editorial

EDWARD HULTON

RULE BRITANNIA?

MANY people are saying that the Labour Party will lose enormous numbers of votes over the appointment of an American Admiral as Supreme Commander of the Atlantic. For, although it is sometimes said that the working man is only concerned with his immediate interests, it is often emotional issues which really swing General Elections. It was the weakness of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's foreign policy which lost the Conservative Party immense kudos, especially amongst middle-class voters.

It was, I believe, the British Admirals who in 1948 were all for the appointment of an American; and I gather that they take the same view today. In one sense, they are right. For if some Congressman wanted the whole fleet to be shifted to the Pacific, an American Admiral would be in a stronger position to stop this. Yet I think that the overriding considerations should be the morale of the British people, and the prestige of the United Kingdom with the American Administration. I am personally extremely pro-American. This country, however, must have absolute equality with the United States. In Mr. Churchill's time we had this equality. It can hardly be denied that the ubiquitous quality of the Labour Administration has been weakness.

HERBERT THE AWKWARD

Mr. Herbert Morrison's speech on 3 March at Leeds was 'awkward', to say the least. He has made some clever speeches on Home Affairs. His effort on Foreign Affairs revealed less knowledge and less adroitness. It was altogether too apologetic to the pro-Kremlin element of his Party. He is now saying, 'The liberation of hundreds of millions of Asian peoples [sic] is the most important of all the Labour Government's achievements to date.' (The Indians have had a change of régime. Is this necessarily 'liberation'?) Further, 'If we are to get through the years ahead without an atomic war, the world is going to depend to a remarkable degree on the friendships which Labour Britain has won in Asia.' What does this mean? Leaving aside China, India is now, at best, neutral, and Pakistan very cross! Meanwhile the British Indian Army no longer stands as a barrier to the Kremlin's aggression.

According to Mr. Morrison, the Russians are 'awkward'; and it is only 'our reactionaries who seem to think that the third world war has already begun, and that we must act accordingly.' Why, furthermore, does he think that it is 'ironic' that 'America's relations with Europe can be taken as a model of democratic relations between States'?

HAVE THE WHITES A FUTURE?

An important, though naïve, article appeared recently in the *Observer* about Africa. It is certainly the eleventh hour for decision about that continent. On the one hand, there have been our Government's somewhat farcical experiments in democracy on the Gold Coast. On the other hand, Dr. Malan is now depriving the 'coloured' (that is half-caste) people of their vote. There is also the impatience of the Southern Rhodesians with United Kindom policy, to say nothing of the policies being pursued by France and Portugal in Africa. It is difficult to believe with Mr. Jim Griffiths, the Colonial Secretary, that the future direction of Africa rests with black Trades Unions. (Why should Trades Unions be political, anyhow?) On the other hand, Dr. Malan's policy is now rapidly driving the 'coloured folk', the 'natives', and the South African Indians hugger-mugger into a semi-Communist conspiracy. It is most unfortunate that Lord Hailey should recently have seemed to express approval of Nationalist policy.

There can be no doubt that the official policy of the Colonial Office is wholly unrealistic. Why should the whites be driven out of Central and East Africa? They should, at least, have large areas, or 'cantons', entirely under their control.

* * *

The Government has been far too slow to set up international machinery for the allocation of raw materials. Yet it seems hardly fair that the Americans should seek to keep prices down now, when they made no attempt to produce a 'floor price' when prices were low. Incidentally, what is the official American attitude to Malaya, whose tin and rubber are essential to the anti-Communist effort, and is British occupation 'white imperialism'?

* * *

This distressed world has become surfeited by people who just will not go. One could instance not only Mr. Bevin but Mr. Churchill. Mr. Attlee's health is not good. General Smuts was the same in South Africa; and I am told that even Saudi Arabia is suffering in a similar way from King Ibn Saud. Alas! there seems no constitutional way to get rid of the British Government, which has lost the confidence of the Electorate. One is tempted to think that there was much merit in the old Chartists demand for annual parliaments.

KREMLIN WANTS WORLD CONQUEST

What is the over-all world position? Judging from Mr. Morrison's speech, even moderate members of the Labour Party do not yet realise that the Kremlin is nothing more or less than a conspiracy of criminals, relentlessly determined to conquer the world. The Labour Party would like to make friends with the Kremlin, but find them 'awkward'. I do *not* say that no *modus vivendi* could be reached by conference.

Where is sanity in the world? Surely it is the 'intellectuals' who have led themselves, and us, astray. Many of them are now, rather feebly, turning towards the Right; they are still providing no effective leadership. Perhaps sanity, after all, resides in the 'Blimps'—and the working-class—though by sanity I do not necessarily mean the higher qualities of leadership.

What is profoundly disturbing is that Democracy at present seems to have lost the will to defend itself—a quality possessed by the lowest animals—or even to demand beef instead of cigarettes, ice-cream, celluloid and television. It is extraordinary that the Americans seem so much keener than the British or the French, or the Italians, or the Germans, to defend our own continent. Some brilliant 'intellectual' appears to have told Mr. Morrison that the vital theatre is Asia; whilst I noticed that a Chinese Communist leader confessed that the vital theatre is Europe. It is self-evident that Europe is far more important than the whole of Asia and Africa rolled into one, if only because of her great industrial development. If the Kremlin can unite under the hammer and sickle, Russia, Germany, Western Europe and Britain, even America could not avoid Communist conquest in the long run.

Meanwhile the next eighteen months are the period of maximum danger. After eighteen months our defences should be much stronger. Only firmness with the Kremlin will prevent immediate war. The wars of 1914 and 1939 could both have been avoided, had the governments of the West made their determination to defend themselves absolutely clear.

Editor's Note on Contributors

I should like to say that I am not quite sure whether the large quantity of French material in the magazine this month has arrived by accident or design, but I believe it 'hangs together' and will interest anyone who cares for good writing. M. Pierre Seghers, who has contributed the 'Letter from Paris', is a publisher, critic and poet; his article was written, as it happened, just before the death of André Gide. Bernard Malamud is a young American writer—this is one of his first published stories—and I should be interested to know what readers think of his work, and also of Mr. Francis Ponge, the intimate friend of things. M. Jean Schlumberger was one of the founders of the Nouvelle Revue Française and of the most famous of all little theatres, the *Vieux Colombier*. His reminiscences of Gide are taken from his autobiography, *Eveils*, which appeared recently in Paris. Señor Faraldo, who writes on Dali's designs for *Don Juan*, is the literary and theatre critic of a Madrid paper. I am not sure that he is pleased at the prospect of having to review a new Dali production every year, and when I saw him, he spoke hopefully of retiring to the country to write a novel.

Notes

RAW MATERIALS CONTROL

At the invitation of the United States a start has already been made with the scheme to impose some measure of control on the present chaotic conditions of the world's raw materials markets. One of the international commodity committees is already at work and by the beginning of April six groups will have been formed. This development is one of the chief results of the visit of Mr. Attlee to Washington at the end of last year and is designed, from the British point of view at least, to apply a brake to runaway prices and to work out an equitable system of sharing essential raw materials, without which the rearmament drive and the whole civilian and export economy would be seriously upset. It is not at the moment possible to apply to the flow of supplies the relatively simple method of controlling shipping that was used during the war, and the delegates in Washington have the difficult task of persuading each other to agree to a fair share of basic commodities at reasonable prices. One of the chief difficulties is that, under present American stock-piling contracts, it is not possible to extend arrangements beyond the two years which the present Congressional term has to run, as Congress is not constitutionally capable of committing its successors to appropriations. However, in some commodities it is necessary to plan at least five years ahead in order to ensure sufficient supplies at equitable prices.

FRANCE

France advances from crisis to crisis. The only solution which the parties of the centre can find to the challenge of the autumn elections is to devise some kind of proportional representation which will ensure their return to power. Unhappily there is no agreement on the details. The elder statesman of the radical party, M. Herriot, has found it necessary to resign from a position which had more the category of a monument, due to disagreements within the party about entering into some agreement with the forces of General de Gaulle. On either wing the Gaullists and the Communists continue their propaganda campaigns for solutions which would mean the end of parliamentary institutions in France.

In the international sphere, France's two principal contributions to the problems of European Unity, the Schuman and the Pleven plans, continue to have a rough passage. The resuscitated and heartened German heavy industralists are finding new reasons for non-co-operation in the iron and steel pool, and the first international conference in Paris on the army plan was something very like a fiasco, with more observers than delegates from the nations invited to participate. About the only sign of national resurgence has been a remarkable display of new French weapons at Baumhalder camp in their German Occupation Zone, and a somewhat empty but certainly cordial reaffirmation of mutual Franco-Italian interests at the meeting between their Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers at Santa Margherita, where the setting, at least, must have been a pleasant change from the turmoil of Paris.

KOREA

General Matthew B. Ridgway, the ground commander of the United Nations forces in Korea, has managed to prove some useful military truths. He has confounded both the easy optimists of the 'push-button' school of warfare and the pessimists paralysed by the 'overwhelming manpower' school of thought. While he has demonstrated that men with machines have to fight to win, he has shown equally that men without them are not necessarily at an advantage on the score of numbers alone. Figures, and above all official figures, have long been the bane of the Korean campaign, but it has been adequately proved on a number of occasions that well-entrenched, confident troops with good equipment can inflict casualties at ratios approaching or even exceeding a hundred to one. Moreover, the Americans have now learnt the lesson which we learnt on the North West

Frontier and they should have learnt at the Kasserine Pass—that you cannot control the valleys without controlling the heights.

General Ridgway's appointment throws an interesting light on American military politics. These have their basis in the rivalry between General Wood and General Pershing in the First World War, when Pershing, although slightly the junior, was given command of the American Expeditionary Force in 1917. His favourite protégé was a young officer named Marshall, whereas General Wood's was named MacArthur. The rivalry continued when General MacArthur, as Chief of Staff in the early thirties, appointed Marshall to the command of the Illinois National Guard, the only occasion in his career when Marshall is said to have protested against his orders. When MacArthur began his long Far Eastern proconsular service, Marshall was able to advance his own favourites. One of these was named Lawton Collins, now Chief of Staff, and the second Ridgway, with whom he made a tour of Latin America before Pearl Harbour.

THE SATELLITES

Russian *Gleichschaltung* behind the Iron Curtain continues its wearisome and savage way. The latest victim is Czechoslovakia, where, in a nation-wide purge, Doctor Vladimir Clementis, the former Foreign Minister, is the most prominent victim. His promotion to office on the tragic death of Jan Masaryk seems to have brought him little personal satisfaction or gain. The chief personalities accused with him of 'plotting to seize power in the party and the state' are Mme. Marie Svermova, a Moscow-trained assistant secretary—general of the party and widow of Jan Sverma, a wartime resistance hero, and Otto Sling, the Communist Party political secretary at Brno, who is married to an English wife, and is specifically accused of being an agent of the British secret service.

It seems clear that the smoke screen of these arrests is designed to cover the shaky Czech economic position, in which production costs continue to soar and agricultural production declines. In particular, the failure of bread and flour supplies is described officially as 'catastrophic'. The President, Klement Gottwald, has announced that the whole party organisation down to the smallest workshop cell is to be reorganised and strengthened in view of the present flagging enthusiasm. The form which this action will take has been only too clearly demonstrated elsewhere.

PORTUGAL

The Portuguese National Assembly is at present devoting its attention to several significant changes in the 1933 constitution. One of the government proposals calls for the insertion of the word 'liberties' in the article defining the duty of the State to compel respect for the rights and guarantees of citizens. The number of deputies is to be increased from 90 to 120 and they will be elected for a term of three years instead of four. With the incorporation of Portugal in the Atlantic Pact, a clause is being inserted in the Constitution guaranteeing their jobs to men called up for military service, and emphasis is laid on the State's obligation to 'strive for improvements in the condition of the least favoured classes of society.' Changes in the Colonial Act provide for a new status for Portuguese Overseas Territories, which will now be integrated into the 'Portuguese Overseas Empire' with an Overseas Minister to watch over its interests. Perhaps the most interesting amendment, however, concerns the position of the Portuguese Royal Family. Last year the ban on their residence in Portuguese territory was lifted, but they were still debarred from standing as candidates for the Presidency of the Republic to the sixth generation. The government now proposes to abolish this limitation; this may give an indication of Doctor Salazar's plans for the future and in particular for the succession to the Chief Office of State.

Mr. Nehru also has plans for one of Portugal's 'overseas provinces', Goa the Golden, founded by the great Albuquerque in 1510. Speaking to the Indian Parliament recently he said: 'The House will be interested to know what the Portuguese Government consider justification for their presence in Goa . . . In any event, it is of

the organic essence of the Indian nation and of the historic process that brought independence to India to free those parts of India that are still under colonial rule. Verbal changes and enactments make no difference to these essential facts and the Government of India will adhere to the policy which has been so frequently reiterated.' The words 'historic mission' have a sadly familiar ring, and if the policy Mr. Nehru mentions is the one he has been applying to the Kashmir dispute, the less it is reiterated, the better.

SIAM

The familiar apostrophising by Peking radio of Siam's political leaders as 'lackeys of Wall Street' cannot hide the fact that this small country of eighteen million people, wedged between Burma and Indo-China, is one of the few stable elements in the turmoil of East Asian nationalism. Traditionally monarchist and Buddhist, two thirds of the farmers who till the rich soil own their own land. Of all the rice-producing countries Siam is the only one to have a continuing export surplus.

The chief concern of Marshal Pibul Songgram, the dictatorial Prime Minister who came to power with the help of the army, and long lay under the shadow of having governed the country under the Japanese occupation, is the eventual attitude of the Chinese members of the population, estimated to number some four million, in the event of a call on their loyalty by the Peking government. Much inter-marriage has taken place, and the Chinese are closely assimilated into the Siamese economy, in which, as usual, they occupy a dominating position. The underground Communist Party is almost entirely Chinese in character, but the only possible opposition leader, Pridi Panamyong, who enjoyed a short period of power just after the war, is in exile and accused of complicity in the assassination of the King in 1946. Marshal Pibul has built up a strong police force, and the arrival of United Nations and American Aid is enabling him to maintain a position of strength.

LA PRENSA

Dictators are all drearily the same, and it is hardly surprising, though completely deplorable, that President Peron should have suppressed *La Prensa*, the only surviving independent newspaper in the Argentine, and the leading newspaper in South America. For years Peron has harried *La Prensa*, using the weapons available to the government of any controlled economy, holding up newsprint, forbidding the import of machinery, withholding licences and alleging a shortage of manpower. It is significant that the final decision to break the paper was caused by its objective reports of a dispute over the nationalised railways, and that the means employed was government-controlled unions. When fantastic, and obviously inspired, demands by the Newsvendors' Union were refused, the unions struck in sympathy and forcibly prevented the printers from going to work. The next step (such an obvious one) was to get the official unions to pass resolutions denouncing the paper as an enemy of the workers and demanding its expropriation. General Peron will no doubt feel obliged to accede to this demand after the owner and editor has been duly convicted of promoting disorder. The *Washington Post* has rightly said that the deliberate extinctions of liberty is a matter of international concern and that the United States should not remain silent. Neither should this country, but is there any hope of Mr. Morrison coming forward as a champion of the liberty of the press?

DIDYMUS

LOUIS MACNEICE

I

A million simmering kettles: in the Destroyer's shrine
The world is on the boil, bats in malodorous dark
Under a pyramid of writhing sculpture
That rams the destroying sky. But round the unsculptured lingam,
The restful purposeful indifferent phallus,
The bats like microbes stitch their hectic zigzag
Of black on black, of blind on blind, and dot
And carry and dot and carry and sizzle like seaweed
That reeks on the shore of the Infinite. While outside
The whole of India jinks and twitters too
Around her granite axis; so shrill yet so resigned,
Monochrome under her motley, monolith under her flimflams,
Mute column of black stone hung round with grace-notes,
Smoke from no visible fire; yet fire like a fir-cone
Nestles in Shiva's hand, the dainty embryo
Of all that is and the end of all, the core
That never moves nor melts yet holds the dance,
Innumerable limbs reduced to one
Black pencil of pure fire. Roses and sandalwood,
Red spittle on the flagstones of the temple,
Green flash of parrots, phosphorescent waves,
Caparisoned elephants and sacred bulls,
Crystal-gazers, navel-gazers, pedants,
Dazzling and jangling dancers, dazzling lepers,
Begging unfingered hands and mouthing eyes,
Faces on faces each like a blind end,
Lives upon lives bubbles of jewelled scum
Born every second and reborn regardless,
Who has come here against you? Slow of speech
With trouble in his eyes and tarry hands
And no sophistication and no caste,
Who has come here armed with two plain crossed sticks
To flout your banyan riot of dialectic?
Is it a prince whose veins run blue with magic?
Is it a sage whose water-divining mind
Will twitch to the smallest drop at the final nadir?
Is it a god who has more arms than yours,
More words, more shapes, more worlds, invincible avatar?
No; it is Doubting Thomas.

II

Nothing more simple. Among the tarnished
Mirrors of paddy and cocoanut palms,
Black-and-white turkeys in courtly fantails,
And no human beings but children,

Tiny and self-assured in whitewash
Stands a plain church, no frills, no gilt,
Among Portuguese names on wooden crosses,
The Church of the Little Mount;

Whitewashed also within—the barrel
Vault as hale as a barrel of flour.
But under the chancel there sleeps a crypt
Not so much crypt as cave;

And here, says the plaque, here in Madras
Before Madras or Madeira was heard of
Here was the hiding place of the saint
Who had left his faith to his hands.

His two hands only, only two—
What could they prove against Shiva and Krishna?
Or against the sweet-toothed jumbo-god
With his trunk in a bowl of candy.

Peter would have talked big and John
Have called forth a serpent out of the sherbet,
Paul would have matched them abstract with abstract
But this man, how could he start?

With his two hands and his cruse of doubt
Which never ran dry? And even doubting,
For those dark and sly and chameleon minds,
Was a technique they knew.

So, after days in the cave, of a night
He would sneak to the beach and watch the indifferent
Waves of the shark-ridden ocean and dream
Of nets that he used to mend.

And of the man who spied him at it;
He could no longer remember his face
Nor most of his words, he could only remember
That his nets were repaired on time

And that so it began, a doubtful beginning,
His fisherman's hands were hardly right
For a preacher's gestures, he would have sooner
Saved them to tie strong knots.

Reduced from Moor's Hindu Pantheon

Yet, staring out at the phosphorous wave-tops
And brushing away the eye-flies, Thomas
Thought of the Indian kings who never
Would raise a hand, having hands

Bought by the thousand for them, slaves
With enormous fly-whisks; and Thomas thought
Of the Indian gods who could sprout at pleasure
All the hands they might need.

And then he thought: I am proud, I have only
Two hands for all things, including the cross,
As have the coolies; it is my mission
To help their lack with mine.

And besides that sea like a sea on the moon
He clasped his hands to make sure they were only
Two and, finding them two but strong,
Raised them gently and prayed.

III

Oh but my doubt is a sea harsher than this that I see,
  Oh but my hands tremble fumbling the night,
To all of my questions I know the reply must be No;
  To me those tongues of fire were fire, not light.

Blessed are those who believe and ask no leave
  Of hand or eye, for whom all water is wine,
Who whatever the weight on the heart have the heart to wait
  For the clouds to lift—a gift that was never mine.

Whatever the clime, my task is ever to climb
  Foothills that never are mountains; this Indian sky
Is bowed with the dour moonsoon and I doubt but soon
  All of my converts and most of my work must die.

I doubt that I have the least right to preach or write
  In the name of Christ, I doubt that my doubt can find
One hint that my terrible rôle could aspire to roll
  The stone from the door of the tomb of the Indian mind.

I doubt and I doubt; in a crumbling exposed redoubt,
  Enfiladed by heathendom, here to the end
I watch in the endless rain to herald the reign
  Of the Friend of Man—but can he be Thomas's friend?

Was he that once, the sole delight of my soul?
  My memory wilts in the heat. I was mending a net
When I sensed with a start that I was under his eye
  And he called my name; the rest of his words I forget.

Is he my friend still? No, perhaps. All that I know
  Is that each rice-farmer, snake charmer, scavenger, merchant, mahout,
Each life in this land that is sore has the chance to soar
  To find and keep that friend. But, for myself, I doubt.

IV

The last light purples the mirrors of paddy, the tracks
Become dark rivers of peasants with brushwood on their heads,
Rivers which all day long flowed out of sight
Leaving the world to children. Now the palmtrees
Grow dark like gigantic fly-whisks and the church
A glimpse of white that might be a temple; though here
The lingam, could it be here, were only an axis
Abstracted from or imagined on space, while space
Shrinks to a granite hide-out and the world
Turns round that hollow kernel where all noise
Lies folded away like grave-clothes. Only a whisper
More tenuous than the shriek of one lost bat
Spins out like the one weak thread of one lost spider,
The ghost of the groping doubt of one lost man.

Thomas, Thomas, were you right
In your blindness to preach light?
Cowering there in that dark crypt
With body and soul so ill equipped
And the Christ whom once you knew
Torn for ever from your view,
Thomas, Thomas, do you find
That out of sight means out of mind?

Out of sight . . . These millions, where do they vanish in the daytime?
These ants who thrust and haul the crumbs from Shiva's table
While Shiva's foot, as he dances, hangs above them,
Their life being merely between one step and the next,
One tap on the drum and the next. And the gospel of Thomas
Which grants each ant its worth is only by proxy
Since Thomas himself is a proxy, hawking a faith
That he knows should be theirs while he dare not assume it is his
Unless he confirm and remind himself by his hands
Caressing his walls of rock, batting the flies,
Or pressing them merely together, those hands that once
Were tested and proved, yet failed through needing a test.

> Thomas, Thomas, do you not
> Even yet repent your lot?
> Fisherman who left your boat
> To trawl for souls, nameless, remote.
> Which when you catch and lift them high
> Flash like mackerel and then die.
> What started this you know—but why?
> Thomas, Thomas, do not lie!

Liar? Not Thomas; he had too much doubt
And hair on the back of his hands, they looked so clumsy
Yet in the dark could tell new twine from old
And tell himself himself, they had taught him once
That a spirit was still a man, since when in his sleep
More than awake they grope as if under sea
To prove all men are spirit. Believing Thomas,
Apostle to the Indies! If never there,
The Indies yet can show in a bare church
On a bare plaque the bare but adequate tribute
To one who had thrust his fingers into the wounds of God.

Had there been a single great statesman of international calibre in Western Europe today, there would have been no need to write this article

CREATING A GERMAN ARMY

CYRIL FALLS
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In all the talk about the rearming of Western Germany we note three national views: those of the United States, of France, and of Western Germany itself. The British view is not distinctive. It may be called a compromise between the American and the French, but it has probably moved closer to the first than to the second. What is remarkable is the extent to which the British Government has hardened in favour of rearmament. Before the Korean affair it did not want the subject mentioned. Now, with whatever reservations, it frankly favours the principle.

The American estimate is simple and straightforward. It is that of a nation which, though now inextricably involved in Europe, is not a European nation and not given to the doubts and hesitations so prevalent in modern Europe. It is first and foremost strategic. The Atlantic Treaty powers cannot defend Germany without German aid. Failure to defend Germany would allow Russian forces virtually to start off from the Rhine. This would not allow sufficient depth of defence to afford a good prospect of defending continental Europe. German aid would provide the depth, and also greatly strengthen the available forces. Therefore, put up with lesser dangers in order to avoid the greatest, and call in German aid.

The French started with complete hostility to the whole project. One reason for their dislike of it was the fear that it might precipitate a Russian attack. A second was the feeling that the United States might not fully participate or might back out if conditions grew easier, leaving France cheek by jowl with a rearmed Germany. Above all, the very notion of a new German Army was repugnant and alarming to them. They looked back on three wars within three-quarters of a century, in two of which they had suffered complete defeat. They could not overlook the danger represented by their own Communist friends of Russia. Since then they have become partly reconciled to the idea, but, without counting Communist opposition, not united on the subject.

The German reaction was unexpected by those who were not in close touch with the country. Genuine pacifism is widespread in Western Germany, especially among the young and the intellectuals, among Protestants as opposed to Catholics, and the Left Wing (and even Left Centre) as opposed to the Right. Opposition to any revival of the former German Army and General Staff on the old pattern goes beyond these limits. Another factor diverging from this dividing-line is national pride. Here there appears an inconsistency: on the one hand Germans demand that, if there is to be a new German Army, it should be so organised that it could not plan aggressive war or threaten internal liberty, which can only mean that it should be subject to strict international control; on the other, it is laid down that Germany can come in only on a basis of 'complete equality'. Germany again has become rather more reconciled to the idea, but again is far from united about it.

If the Atlantic Treaty powers had seemed to be surer of their own minds and had brought forward their proposals sooner, it may be that the Western German Chancellor and his Government would themselves have welcomed them more heartily and have found it easier to advocate their acceptance. The long

delays due to the discussion in the United States, during which it became clear that American, British, and French opinions were being reconciled only with difficulty, chilled such ardour as the supporters of the scheme could muster and gave the opposition a good chance to stir up opinion against it. The Germans began to wonder whether they were not being asked to make sacrifices for no tangible reward. Better the Russians than another devastation, said many of them.

The statement of Mr. Attlee, in which one could, if one felt so inclined, discern an intention to relegate German rearmament to a vague and misty future, while paying lip service to it as an ideal, and to allay anxiety among the Government's followers rather than face the problem squarely, came as a further cold douche. The suggestion that Germany, in the front line, would have to wait for arms till all the rest had got them, was unpleasing. These events and tendencies have made the task of Dr. Adenauer, a task mainly concerned with his own people, harder.

Inevitably, too, those who think they see in the question a bargaining counter feel that it would be pedantic folly not to use it. More and more demands have been made for the lifting of the last controls and restrictions. Germany, it is argued, cannot be at once an ex-enemy in chains and a partner in defence. On balance, however, it appears that German opinion is in the majority in favour of *some* form of rearmament. What form is it to be and when is it to be brought into being?

Before answering that question, we have to ask another: What is a 'European Army'? Its sponsors have been coy about telling us. In the first place, it must depend upon some international instrument of supreme power, some closer integration of sovereignty, one would suppose, than the Atlantic Treaty itself. This is an ideal, that of federalism, which is frowned upon by the British Government and has not made much progress of late. However much we may admire it, it is doubtful whether we can afford to wait for it to be attained before getting on with the business of European defence, including that of German participation.

A 'European Army' has been brought in here because it so obviously concerns Germany. The idea would not have been mooted but for the necessity of finding a means by which German rearmament could be carried out and which might overcome doubts in both France and Germany. There is no room here to continue the legalistic discussion. Let us look at the most probable constitution of such an army and try to find out whether it is likely to provide that boon so difficult to obtain—a German Army which will be terrible to its foes without causing anxiety to its friends.

A European Army would be made up of units or formations from the nations contributing to it. (The notion of completely international units sounds attractive, but has a number of technical disadvantages which cannot be dealt with here.) Then the question arises what size these units or formations should be. The division is the obvious one from the point of view of military efficiency. It is a force of all arms which can operate independently and can be administered conveniently. With anything smaller, there is apt to be a waste of effort and of manpower. For this reason, according to all accounts, the Americans advocated that German troops should be formed into divisions.

The French thought a division was too big. It would be a step on the road towards the re-creation of the old German Army, and that they were determined not to take. And, after all, two British Commonwealth brigades have served in Korea, apparently without causing undue confusion. Eventually, it was reported from the United States that agreement had been reached to form German 'combat groups' of about 6,000 strong. When we use the term agreement, we refer only to the discussions between the United States, Great Britain, and France; Germany was not in the debate at that stage, and, as has been shown, Germany's adherence to schemes in which she has not been a partner cannot be assumed without question. It is not clear to what stage the debate has now got. Let us presume, because it seems probable, that Germany would in principle agree to raise such units.

Next we have to decide how they should be armed. Should they include armour? Most certainly yes, armour, artillery, and engineers, as well as at least three battalions of infantry, if the best value is to be obtained from them. At once we find ourselves faced by the further question whether there should be a German Air Force. It would seem that there ought to be at all events German tactical squadrons for direct support. We are, it will be seen, moving far from the original crude and simple French suggestion of single German infantry battalions. It is certain that Germany would not accept such a proposal, and if she did, it is not one that would pay. If there is to be rearmament, it must be done properly. There is no object in playing with it.

Then, let us suppose the Americans to say, if you are going as far as combat groups on these lines, you had better go a bit farther, to divisions. It will make no real difference. One difference which it would make would be to necessitate the creation of larger German staffs. A modern divisional staff is a considerable organisation. That takes us into another problem. An attempt has been made to show that, when it is decided to build up German fighting forces, one has to go farther than what politicians consider expedient. If too much care is taken to ensure that they are innocuous, they may prove to be relatively innocuous to the enemy also. But the objections have not been only to the re-creation of the old German Army; they have also been lodged against a reconstitution of the General Staff.

Now a General Staff is in one sense a body which sits at the top to plan and direct operations, and it is as such that the average layman pictures it. In another sense, however, a General Staff comprises a body of staff officers serving right down the hierarchy. It is clearly impossible to avoid re-creating it in this sense. The general commanding a combat group must have his staff, and he will almost certainly require staff representatives with higher formations from which his group takes its orders. In that sense a General Staff cannot be dispensed with. Certainly trained staff officers cannot be, so presumably there must be a school of some sort which provides instruction in staff duties. It will be seen that we get continually pushed on, step by step, away from the simple conception of a few German troops amalgamated with those of other nations. Now we have to consider further steps which may be disagreeable to many.

We shall find that we cannot maintain our reservations altogether even about a General Staff at the top. A General Staff contains various branches: operations, intelligence, recruitment and discipline, training, movements, administration—there may be more. Let us say a German operations branch would not be necessary. It would be folly to try to do without intelligence because Germany is one of the best sources of military intelligence in Europe today. Recruitment and discipline represents an essential branch. The German soldier must be enrolled, registered, made subject to a code of military law. A training branch is wanted because he must be trained by his own officers and that training must be worked out in terms of doctrine and supervised. Movements we may perhaps pass. Administration is highly important. It could not profitably be taken over by another nation; it could not be carried out without control by a branch of the staff. So we arrive at the position that there must be some form of General Staff and also some political organ of control, something in the nature of a Ministry of Defence; call it what you will if you think you can find a more soothing term.

The object of this analysis is not to scare, not to raise difficulties for the sake of so doing, and least of all to oppose the principle of German rearmament. It is to show that the question is by no means as simple as optimists, especially among the politicians, are inclined to suppose. It is also a bow to the critics of the policy, a recognition that there is something in their objections, even though they themselves may not always understand exactly what it is. Most such problems involve a choice between objections and indeed between risks.

It is often said that Russia has no interest in bringing on a war. She is not

doing so badly by her present methods and may be expected to continue them. This belief is quite possibly true, but none the less a terribly dangerous one on which to base policy and action. Even if we do not see what she has to gain by war, even if we are honestly convinced that she has infinitely more to lose than to gain by it, this may not be how the matter appears to the Kremlin. We do not know one way or the other. It would be a very serious risk to count on Russia holding her hand. The retort may be that the rearmament of Germany also represents a serious risk. There exists no scientific yard-stick for the measurement of risks, so it can only be said that the risk inherent in German rearmament appears to be considerably smaller than that of Russian aggression. The great danger is indeed that the timidity and stupidity of politicians, especially our own, may have lost time which it will not be possible to recover.

The form which German rearmament should take cannot be discussed here. A longer article than this would be required to deal with it adequately. It is technical, and to the layman not particularly interesting. On the other hand, as regards the actual composition of units, it represents no particular difficulty to trained staff officers. Questions of military law, currency, and customs are more difficult, but have already been answered where Western Union is concerned. All that need be said is that, if the French prove unshaken in their opposition to divisions, the next best German combatant formation would be a brigade of all arms: three battalions of infantry; a battalion of tanks; field, anti-aircraft, and anti-tank artillery; engineers; signal troops and supply service. Behind all that there would, of course, be required the holding units, schools, workshops, record offices, and the large administrative machinery considered necessary for a modern army. German staff officers should have their place in the headquarters of the corps and the army.

Had there been a single great statesman of international calibre in Western Europe today, there would have been no need to write this article because all the Governments and peoples would have realised months ago the necessity to act, and would by now have acted. Loquacity has been the refuge of those unable to make up their minds, still less to act. Is there no cure for this mental and physical paralysis?

IT MAY HAPPEN IN HUNGARY

JULIAN SCHOPFLIN

Until 1950 Hungarian Envoy in Stockholm

THERE is one thing you cannot argue about with Western Communists: the moral grandeur of the Soviet Union. In their understandable blindness, they cling to this Utopia which conjures up, in their wishful minds, the mirage of a free, generous, refined Soviet people, the true representatives of a better world order. This naïvely self-imposed belief is often bolstered up by (carefully selected) actual experience: the only Russians they see are smiling Embassy attachés, hand-picked delegates to some international conference or, more often, victorious heroes of newsreels. With a characteristic turn of mind, proving *idem per idem*, they feel justified in regarding these apparitions as the incarnation of their own illusions.

The opinion of satellite Communists about their Russian comrades has been formed by radically different and more realistic experiences. In their minds there is anything but enthusiasm or reverence towards the Soviet liberators. There is a broad scale of attitudes among Communists of the 'people's democracies' towards the

Russians, ranging from cynical cringing to secret hatred and contempt; unconditional devotion and blind obedience is, however, to be found only among two groups, the handful of Moscow-trained leaders and the host of opportunists who are willing to serve the devil himself for the sake of a few crumbs from the feast of power.

In assessing the anti-Russian forces in the Iron Curtain countries, it is rather misleading to take into account only the old middle classes and the landed peasants—although these have every reason to hate the Russians and Communists alike. On account of their disorganised state and their wholly negative attitude, these classes no longer represent a serious social force, especially as regards leadership. It is an interesting, though somewhat depressing, phenomenon that large numbers of the opportunists rallying behind the present régime are being recruited from the professional middle classes; resigned to the hopelessness of any return to the past, these people attempt to regain the shadow of their former status by becoming the unprincipled servants of the Communist government.

In Hungary, for instance, this fact applies first and foremost to the officers' corps. The majority of present Hungarian staff officers do not consist of the few who distinguished themselves in the anti-German Resistance (they mostly shared the fate of General Palffy, the 'accomplice' of Rajk); the favoured Hungarian pupils of the Russian General Staff School are selected from those who were captured, together with their German allies, at the surrender of Budapest.

It seems to me much more important to analyse the attitude of those who are, by their intellectual qualities and their posts in public service, part of the governing class—hitherto indispensable to the régime but nevertheless secretly and bitterly opposed to the crude and violent Soviet overlordship—such as Communists of long standing, Leftist intellectuals and the class conscious section of the working class. The mere physical appearance of the Soviet Man was an unnerving shock to them. The present insane adulation of Stalin and the Soviet way of life, to the detriment of all national values, weighs on them with increasing pressure. It would be a grave miscalculation to disregard the inner behaviour of these groups, especially as by all accounts it is they who hold the key of any possible change.

I heard the rumble of Russian guns on the southern border of Budapest for the first time on the night of the 3rd November 1944. It is difficult to convey the strange, elated anguish which overpowered me at this threatening and exhilarating roar. The Nazi terror had been reigning supreme in Budapest for weeks past. Thousands of victims—Jews, Socialists and simple deserters alike—were being massacred by the SS. I myself was doubly a fugitive; as a deserter from the Army and as a proscribed Communist, liable to be shot on the spot if ever arrested. I was living under a false name, in one hiding-place after the other. Thousands of others existed on similar terms in the besieged capital.

In spite of German propaganda which described the horrors of a Russian occupation, the whole population waited for the Russians as for saviours. To everyone, the Red Army stood for deliverance from war and terror. We Communists especially were awaiting our liberators with a special feverish joy, for to us they were expected to bring not only an end to our ordeals but also the message of a better, freer world.

At dawn on 16 January 1945, when, for the first time in my life, I met Russian soldiers, the idealistic dream, cherished throughout bitter and frustrated years of underground struggles, collapsed with one mighty crack. The smiling Russian trooper who tore off my wrist-watch dealt the first blow to my belief in Bolshevism.

And this was only the first draught of shame and humiliation. The daily blows to our moral and humane concepts tore to shreds the remnants of all idealism in honest Hungarian Communists. The months-long free pillage, the barbarous mass-rapes, the houses burnt down by the sheer negligence of Russian soldiers (Budapest had no water at the time!), the ruthless recruitment of the civil population for front-line tasks—more than once I was forced to push Russian guns to the

battle-front and to drag ammunition under the fire of German snipers—turned the exultation of freedom into a deeply-embarrassed feeling of despair.

Over and above the only too well-known behaviour of the Russian soldiers, there were some even more bewildering aspects of Russian cruelty and indifference. Their officers dispelled any assumption that the Socialist Man had been liberated from the bondage of private property. The adepts of collective economy proved to be the shrewdest business men, amassing huge profits on the black market. Hundreds of Russian army lorries plied through the uncertain frontiers, hauling looted or bartered goods from country to country. Almost every Russian officer in a responsible position took his toll of the famine in Budapest. Flour was sold by them for its weight in gold, matches for U.S. dollars; they transformed the streets of the town into a huge Oriental bazaar.

All this had, of course, a shattering effect on those who regarded themselves as well-versed Marxists, revolutionaries in the original, pure sense of the word of Marx and Lenin. Instead of freedom, there was fear; instead of humane ideals, purposeless cruelty; instead of social justice, famine and black-marketeering. The Russian comrades contradicted on every hand the prophecies of the Soviet Fathers about the enlightened, free, tolerant Soviet Man. Every Russian soldier was a living refutation of ideals for which hundreds of Hungarian Communists had died on the gallows, in cellars or in Nazi concentration camps.

The most painful—and, for Communists, most humiliating—chapter of the Russian occupation was their method of 'taking prisoners', a method alarmingly reminiscent of Jenghiz Khan or Tamerlane. The Hungarian people, being more or less accustomed to the Prussian kind of civil discipline and regimentation, had expected that the Russian Headquarters would issue some sort of a proclamation, defining the duties and rights of the populace, and would state its demands and orders—in one word, that it would organise the occupation. They would have been resigned even to some regular form of forced labour, or to a capital levy, had it been proclaimed in an orderly way. To the Russians we were, after all, a defeated enemy. Nothing of the sort happened. The initial wave of house-to-house pillage, rape and drunkenness gradually subsided; deliberate murder or large-scale shooting was rare; but, when the whole town was safely in Russian hands, a wholesale man-hunt took place. No able-bodied male dared to show himself in the streets for weeks at a time. Russian Military Police detachments scoured the streets, and whenever they took a fancy to somebody, they simply picked him up and slung him into some filthy PW camp. In this way, men who had starved to skeletons in the ghetto were driven to certain death from typhoid behind the barbed wire. Thousands who never before had seen military service landed up in distant Russian camps. And the maddening feature of this deadly hide-and-seek was its utter confusion and senselessness: you could have been left at large by one patrol, only to be rounded up by the next one.

Later on, a Russian major explained to me the essentials of this seemingly senseless and brutal system. The local commanders had to make a weekly return of prisoners of war, but these usually did not tally with the actual numbers taken. As, however, Hungarian and German soldiers very often changed into civilian clothes, the Russians used these deserters as a pretext for razzias to make good their fancy returns.

The tormenting uncertainty of this state of affairs, the virtual prolongation of underground existence, changed our indignation into anguish, our disappointment into profound despair. You never knew whether you would safely reach your home once you left it; explanations, references, even a party card (printed in both Russian and Hungarian) were of no avail to the 'greencaps'. Once captured, you were ruthlessly kicked behind the wire, unless you could escape on the way at the risk of being shot. As the Communists were the most active and enthusiastic in re-organising and reviving Budapest, scores of them disappeared every day, never to be heard of again.

One day in February 1945, a routine committee meeting of Party propagandists took place at Communist Party

Headquarters. Those present were mostly earnest industrial workers or enthusiastic young intellectuals; many of them plodded miles from the suburbs to reach the meeting-place. One of them, a foundry-worker, broke in on us, panting, bewildered, and cursing; he had just succeeded in slipping from the grip of the Russians, by the skin of his teeth. Shepherded into an empty shop with twenty odd others, he had escaped through a lavatory window and over slippery roof-tops. His remonstrances touched off a furious whirlwind of protest, appeals and table-banging. One member related at length the cunning methods by which he and his fellow-workers were hoodwinking the stupid 'tovarishchi', making good use of every illegal device developed during the Nazi rule—forged documents, the sentry-system, false beards and bribery were all used to save their own skins and their wives' honour. Another commented bitterly on being labelled a 'bourgeois' by ransacking Russians—he, the genuine proletarian! One of them, in the heat of the turmoil, bragged about ambushing and kicking senseless two drunken Cossacks. The astonished and frightened party officials scurried off to fetch a member of the Polit-bureau, who tried, in his turn, to convince the comrades (with apparent lack of success) of the undignified character of their behaviour, unbecoming to Communists, towards their liberators and benefactors.

In subsequent months the leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party were forced to admit that a (mostly passive) resistance to the Russian rule was growing not only among the 'politically uneducated' masses but even in their own ranks. It would have been a superhuman task to launch a Russophile propaganda campaign, so the efforts of the Party machinery were directed towards avoiding any allusion to its relations with Russia and concentrated on internal problems. The Party affected the mock feathers of a purely national organisation. This was the period of the 'separate Hungarian way' of Communism. Party orators were loath to speak about the Soviet Union and for examples turned instead to the exploits of the Yugoslav and French Resistance. Relationships with Leftist movements of the West were then encouraged and exploited for Party purposes. These tortuous tactics inevitably made an impression even on some leaders of the Party. A memorable example of this 'deviation' was the much-publicised 'pilgrimage to Canossa' of the chief Party ideologist, the present Minister of Public Education, Jozsef Revai. He had proclaimed for some years the possibility of a 'different road' to Socialism, until, in 1947, he was summoned at short notice to Moscow—and in a surprisingly short time afterwards, he began to denounce his previous views in the most abject manner of Communist self-criticism.

In the first phase of the always rather awkward Russo-Hungarian relations—the Hungarians are mainly Catholic and non-Slav, so the Russians had not the benefit of the Orthodox church or of a cognate language—the Russians themselves, albeit unwittingly, contributed heavily to the embarrassed relations of the two peoples. Whenever the Russians attempted to devise some propaganda on their own behalf, it usually turned out a tremendous flop, to the great dismay of Hungarian Communists. With their utter lack of understanding of any other people than their own, the Russians generally supplied the best anti-Bolshevik propaganda themselves. The best example, which became the laughing-stock of Budapest, was a serialised dissertation in the official newspaper of the Red Army, published in Hungarian. This astonishing essay bore the title: 'The Morals of the Soviet Soldier'. It praised to high heaven the virtue, dignity, humanity and culture of the Red warriors —when nobody dared to walk the streets after sunset, as every night dozens were stripped naked at tommy-gun point by Russian stragglers. The Hungarian-born Russian Colonel, who was in charge of the newspaper, confessed to me shamefacedly later on, that all his protests and expostulations were in vain—he was expressly ordered from Moscow to print the fatuous treatise in full.

The passivity of the Russians (on the surface at least) concerning Hungarian internal affairs, their rule of

'non-fraternisation' which they extended even to Communists, except a handful of trusted leaders, the ruthless 'realism' they showed towards Hungary at the Paris peace talks (their favouritism towards the nationalist claims of Czechoslovakia destroyed, incidentally, the last vestiges of belief in those who still tried to cling to the Stalinist principle of self-determination for all peoples), and finally the oppressive reparations imposed upon the country—all these added to the accumulation of mingled despair, defiance, contempt and estrangement, produced a curious frame of mind in patriotic Hungarian Communists. A comforting but self-deceiving and ultimately dangerous formula had arisen among them, best described by the then fashionable slogan: 'We shall do it better!' For such men, who had cherished for decades the belief that Communism brought about more freedom, greater development and a more humane morality, this feeling of superiority over the Russians became their only justification for remaining Communists. The bitter experience of the Russian rule was summed up by them roughly like this: The Soviets are unable to put an end to their own barbarousness; they have distorted Marxism by their opportunist hypocrisy; they are using the idea of proletarian internationalism for the camouflage of their Great Russian nationalism; but all the same they are the only progressive force to be relied upon—therefore it would be the historic task of the more-developed Central European nations, of Communists still bursting with fresh, keen, revolutionary spirit, to pour new wine into old bottles, to give a new impact to a Marxism gone stale and, sooner or later, to give an example and a new direction to backward Russia herself.

This attitude was not merely the idle theorising of people who had to believe in something, since no road back lay open to them. Patriotic pride in the restoration of a devastated country, in the land reforms, in the new system of education, the first groping steps of a promising democratisation, filled their hearts. As the lion's share of effort and sacrifice was theirs, they regarded themselves as the makers of a new Hungary. The example of the Bolshevik Party, according to the manner of speaking of those days, was a 'serviceable experience' in both ways, what to do and what to avoid. It was fashionable to quote Lenin on the backwardness of Russia.

This often exaggerated self-confidence did not count, however, with the real array of forces and, above all, with the Party leaders. This 'independent' wing of Hungarian Communists never even dreamt of being deviationist; the 'Muscovites', as the party bosses were called, seemed wholeheartedly to endorse this policy, while it suited their books to gain popularity and prestige. But when the time of reckoning arrived, they were as swift and as ruthless as their masters in the Kremlin in stamping out this opposition which had not even considered itself an opposition.

The talk about any 'separate Hungarian way' was swept away overnight, but the conscience-rending after-effects of the Rajk case are still smouldering under the ashes. Terror and oppression cannot resolve the basic dilemma of Russia concerning her satellites: the difference in the standard of living and culture between the Russian population and the subdued peoples. Either they must forcibly lower the social level of their vassals, with the effect of endangering the vital economic advantages of these relatively more developed countries or they must tolerate this discrepancy, in which case they will have to tackle time and time again the problem of independence.

The sparse news from behind the Iron Curtain tends to show that the Russians have chosen the first course, which means that political considerations have overridden economic exigencies. And this must be regarded as an indirect proof of the precarious hold of Russia over her satellite empire. The Kremlin and its local satraps can never wholly trust and rely upon those who were the strength and the backbone of the Communist Movement in its most difficult hours. The Communist dissenters, on the other hand, wait for a chance to prove that their belief in social progress and independence can be put into practice on other than Russian lines. The example of Yugoslavia demonstrates that this is not so hopeless as they are daily led to believe.

RECOLLECTIONS OF ANDRÉ GIDE

JEAN SCHLUMBERGER

I CAN see myself, a very small boy, playing in the farmyard. The youngsters of Val Richer were playing hide-and-seek. André Gide had arrived from La Roque. With Suzanne and François de Witt, my uncle and aunt after the Breton fashion, he climbed the ladder into the hayloft. I was too young to follow them. To me they were grown-ups. The only odd thing about André Gide was that his voice was breaking.

The Gides were our nearest neighbours. Their woods ran with ours. We used to invite them to lunch once or twice every summer. Sometimes they brought with them the Rondeaux girls, the future Alissa and her two sisters. And Madame Gide occasionally organised a shooting party to return our hospitality.

When André's youthful friendship for François de Witt (the Lionel of *Si le Grain ne meurt*) began to cool, I can imagine that he did his best to escape the burden of our invitations. There is some retrospective irritation in his account of these meals at Val Richer ('Blancmesnil' as he calls it), cut short by the arrival of the postman, the family flinging itself upon the newspapers and isolating itself behind a rampart of paper in total oblivion of the guests.

I only remember his presence on one of these occasions. He was perhaps eighteen at the time and I ten. I cannot say whether he had first suffered quarantine behind the newspapers, but another ordeal had certainly been reserved for him. His reputation as a pianist resulted in continual nagging until he sat down at the keyboard. He played two pieces by heart, and then stopped, paralysed. I have seen him suffer the same inhibition even in ripe age, if he had to demonstrate in front of an audience. One day he told me: 'I am so glad to feel that your presence is no longer a disturbing influence when I am playing.' The ability to remain unnoticed whilst he was playing was an incontestable mark of promotion in his friendship. The inmates of Val Richer had not got so far. I heard the adults discussing him when he had left. 'Did you see how his hands were shaking? He *is* highly-strung, isn't he?' It seemed to me to be the height of distinction to be highly-strung. Should I ever be highly-strung myself? The afternoon became memorable through my preoccupation with this possibility.

* * *

The family was deeply interested in the *Cahiers d'André Walter*. They accepted it as a queer book foreshadowing a great talent. 'The story of a writer,' so they said, 'who is hoping to drive his hero to insanity, before going mad himself.' That was something to intrigue a boy's mind. We knew that Emmanuèle, one of the main characters, was none other than his cousin Madeleine, to whom his devotion was well known. Had Madame Gide unburdened her maternal anxieties to our mothers' hearts? In any case, she was believed to be opposed to this marriage, and when it took place several years later, we assumed that she had nevertheless given her consent on her deathbed.

I am not sure whether I saw anything of Gide between his brief encounter with our piano and his no less brief appearance on a skating rink at St. Moritz in the winter of 1895–6. I had been despatched to the Engadine to restore my supply of red blood corpuscles after taking my *baccalauréat* in philosophy. Did I see his name in the hotel register? I knew that he had just got married and I quickly identified him by his large black felt hat and flowing cape, which easily distinguished him from the crowd of Anglo-Saxons in their caps and knickerbockers. He skated well, in slow, sweeping figures, more like a dancer than an acrobat, the trailing waves of his cape emphasising the languors of his movements. It is considered

good manners to pretend not to recognise a honeymoon couple; I decided, however, that I would bring my skates the next morning. But, next morning, there was no more Gide. I had to wait more than a year for our first conversation.

The circumstances were as grotesque as you might wish. Gide was Mayor of La Roque-Baignard . . . He has told the story of his tribulations as a rural magistrate and how they contributed to his decision to leave the country. One of the duties of a Mayor is to sit on the local Army Selection Board. So there he was, at cantonal headquarters, amongst the Areopagites before whom all the lads of my year were nakedly parading one by one for medical scrutiny and chest measurement. When it came to my turn to be examined under the eyes of all these gentlemen, I was far too preoccupied with my own fate for the coming year to pay much attention to them. But when I was dressed again, I ran into Gide on the steps of the Town Hall. It was just as quick to go home by La Roque, and we set off together.

There were reservations on both sides. To him I was a young co-religionist, studying the history of religion, that is to say, champion of a world against which he was then at the height of his rebellion. On my side, there was a great curiosity; but the *Traité du Narcisse* and the *Voyage d'Urien* were so far removed from the works which had until then been my chief sustenance, that this subtle writer, whose literary and philosophic intentions eluded me, must have seemed a man from another planet. Our conversation was groping. After a quarter of an hour I was pretty well unhorsed. I met an unexpected lukewarmness towards authors I found it quite natural to admire, like the rest of the world. As for my Wagnerism, which was then at fever point, this met not only with indifference but, astonishing as it might seem, even with an unmistakable hostility towards my god. How could any man of culture fail to be amongst those who were campaigning for the triumph of the new music? There was nothing more I dared mention. Was there anyone, then, whom this aesthete admired? Himself, no doubt, and the unknown members of his little circle. He asked me if I had read any Dostoievsky. I had just about heard the name, and I should have been less embarrassed if he had questioned me on Origen and Clement of Alexandria. I replied, as stupidly as possible, that my studies had left me very little time to waste: which earned me the pertinent retort that with such books one did not waste one's time. Although the conversation was so awkward, Gide's good humour and patience prolonged it for more than an hour, in the little room he occupied when alone at La Roque. When I left, I was not disillusioned, but intrigued, discontented, not with him, but with myself, carrying away the name of a Russian novelist as definite booty, and a confused intuition of a whole order of taste, thought and judgment to which I had no key.

* * *

The first letter from André Gide in my possession (no doubt the first he ever wrote to me) is dated 1902. Five years had passed since our first conversation. There had been several meetings in the interval, which brought us, little by little, closer together by multiplying the points at which our minds could meet; but they depended on us both being in Normandy at the same time, which made them infrequent.

Amongst other occasions, I remember the first time Gide brought his wife to have a meal with us at Val Richer. The rules of courtesy which brought him to our house were the reverse of encouraging, for once more he was put through the hoop. *El Hadj* had just been published. My mother was full of questions as to the meaning of this little work. The victim turned and twisted. But my mother did not loosen her grip. Who was this mysterious prince? Who was the friend who followed in his steps? . . . Gide, however, was no longer a timid adolescent; he was becoming a master in the art of disengagement, and was able to divert the discussion to Algeria, which formed the background of the story. He talked about mirages, about the Shotts, about the mud covered by a sparkling deposit of salt; and they all found him so interesting that they let him be. It was agreed that 'young André', although still rather odd, was improving.

I can recall the drawing-room at La Roque and the other rooms in the house with such precision that I must have been invited there many times in the years that followed; for by the time our friendship was beginning to grow really close, Gide had either sold his estate, or was in process of doing so. One autumn, some business summoning me to Calvados, I even spent a night in the little guest room in the so-called 'postern' which had afforded hospitality to Jammes and Ghéon.

Gide's brother-in-law, Marcel Drouin (known to readers of the *Revue Blanche* and *Ermitage* as Michel Arnaud), had been spending part of the summer at La Roque. Gide was not the least of those who admired his supple intelligence and vast reading. He was ranked with Valéry as one of the two great critical minds of that generation: even then we were looking forward to that *Sagesse de Goethe* which formed the basis of all his research. But a fatal aversion to prolonged effort prevented him from producing more than a few chapters which were, however, so admirable that, even when published forty years later, they had lost none of their interest. He was, by profession, Professor of Philosophy and the orientation of my own studies did not appear to him, as it did to Gide, as evidence of an incorrigible Philistinism. When he was there, there were more subjects on which I could venture an opinion . . . the name of Nietzsche was beginning to be heard; Drouin was even then speaking of Kierkegaard. But what meant most to me in these visits to La Roque was the delightful atmosphere which pervaded the house. For the first time I found myself in a circle where all the determining values were literary ones. This was both a shock to all my customary ways of living, and a magnetic attraction. The exquisite tact of Madeleine Gide helped to put me at my ease. However discreetly she might join in the conversation, I often felt that she was on my side. These young women in their summer frocks, this poet with locks flowing romantically over his collar, this sunny, old-world salon, mingle for me with the delicate images evoked by Jammes's first stories.

I do not know what has happened to this room in the reconstructions later inflicted on La Roque by five successive proprietors. Some built, or enriched, or modernised—others were content to plunder, but between them all they succeeded in utterly destroying the pleasant flavour of this little Louis XIII château, cooped up within its waterways. As for the airs of elegiac poetry as then worn by the master of the house, these gave place, with growing assurance, to a greater dandyism. I remember a startling astrakhan waistcoat worn by Gide under his coat at the first performance of *Le Roi Candaule*. We saw him in high collars undulating in studied negligence over ties of Liberty silk, in waistcoats of curious cut, felt hats with extravagant brims; such elegances disappeared little by little beneath the flowing cape by which he was known to the worlds.

But Gide only began to take a real interest in me from the day when, having abandoned the history of religion, I turned deliberately towards literature. I think it was to the flat he then occupied in the *Rue de Commailles*, in Paris, that I first went to ask his advice on those of my poems which seemed the most successful. He did not declare, like Hugo to another novice: that 'I revealed to him the meaning of poetry'; he did not go through the whole bundle, but he studied one or two poems attentively; then, flatteringly, as if to grasp their meaning better, read several strophes aloud. Once when we were very young, my grandmother read us the first pages of *Athalie* with similar magniloquence. (This created to such an extent the impression that the unfortunate woman had gone crazy that, when it was over, we had to dive into an armchair and bury our heads in its upholstery in order to stifle our peals of laughter.) Never since then had I heard verse so astonishingly inflated, 'r's' so rolled, such a solemn amplification of every syllable. (He has retained this diction, which gives full value to some magnificences, drawing out many hidden beauties, but which sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish sublimities from platitudes. I should add that without taking this diction into account, it is impossible to understand some of his preferences.) I cannot imagine

what he could really have enjoyed in the verses I showed him, competent enough in workmanship, but completely devoid of anything that might please a man still deeply imbued with symbolist aesthetics. However, I was sufficiently encouraged to proceed immediately to abuse his kindly reception of my work by taking him the *Mur de Verre* as soon as it was ready.

His first letter deals with this novel. Oddly enough, it is dated—a precaution he only adopted regularly from 1914 onwards, a period during which all correspondence with the front acquired a sort of testamentary gravity. The said letter was written in June 1902, and in spite of all its kindliness, does not conceal the fact that the book had failed to arouse his enthusiasm:

> 'I advise you more than ever to publish your verse first. Their form seemed much more sure, more accomplished than that of your book. The qualities of the latter, which are chiefly moral, are expressed so discreetly that they may escape the attention of readers not already alerted in their favour. Believe me, however, that for my part, I was very moved by them—and perhaps, after all, the public is more sensitive than I make out.'

But that he always knew how to be an excellent adviser is already apparent; already he is insisting on one of his favourite themes:

> 'We were talking of *audacity* at Val Richer: I think you already have an audacity of thought; this is the most important; it leads to all the others; you will quickly learn the audacity *of not saying everything*; for, if your novel contains all that has to be said, I should like it to contain nothing but that. *To omit intermediary ideas*, Montesquieu used to say, is the whole secret of *good writing*.'

* * *

That summer I paid my first visit to Cuverville. Burdened by two estates, Gide had renounced the one where he had passed his childhood, only retaining the large house in Caux to which his wife was very attached. This first, short visit has been somewhat effaced from my memory by many later ones. The same is true of many souvenirs of this period: matured friendship has obliterated the traces of its uncertain beginnings. I was all avidity; and if, with all that my twenty-five years had left behind them, I felt far from a child, I was only beginning to explore a new realm of mind, and I still felt clumsy in comparison with my senior who had been steeped in literature since he left school. His precocity had been extreme; my blood was more tardy; as a result the eight years that separated us seemed doubled. I had little that was personal to offer in exchange for all my gleanings of new ideas; and I diminished this little still further by a reserve partly due to timidity, partly to the belief (useful in ordinary life, but murderous to friendship and particularly inappropriate with Gide) that people are much more interested in themselves than in others, and that one does them a favour by listening to their stories and not importuning them with one's own. I was terribly buttoned up — though not so much in my correspondence and I am astonished that I did not weary the goodwill of a man who was interested in all confidences, but little disposed, since he understood so quickly, to waste his time with preliminaries.

Confined as he still was to a public of two or three hundred readers, it was certainly not distasteful to him to find his remarks falling on such attentive ears. The time was still distant when he would be bombarded by the manuscripts and perplexities of novices. At the *Mercure*, where his writings were considered unsaleable, he was esteemed solely as a distinguished amateur. But his judgment was respected. He used this influence for me with the editor of *Mercure*, Vallette, who agreed to accept my book for publication. Gide also succeeded in getting some of my verses accepted by the review *Ermitage*. I think that one of the main reasons for his attachment was being able to help in an emancipation which in many ways recalled his own breach with the social and religious traditions of his adolescence. Thus he wrote to me from Biskra in December

1903 (I had just dedicated to him the *Poèmes des Temples et des Tombeaux*, which he had helped me to get published):

'There are so many older memories, mingled with our more recent feelings, that at first I wondered how much *real* sympathy could warm our relationship. As soon as memories of the family or of religion come into play, my mind becomes suspicious and frequently lets the heart go on alone. You told me recently that I was the only artist amongst your friends: should I confess that you are the only Protestant amongst mine? Although an artist yourself, or rather, because of that, you were entitled to be somewhat suspicious of my literature, before you knew me, through fear of the little group; similarly, and because I am myself a Protestant, I was able, through fear of the chapel . . . etc. Let us henceforward leave that behind us; the moment we understand one another, our common souvenirs can only strenghen this understanding.'

SOVIET ARMED FORCES

W. E. HART

THE Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union is Marshal Stalin, whose command has always been nominal and especially so since the advent of Marshal Vasilii Vassilievsky as Minister of Defence two years ago. This officer, in his late forties, represents the ideal type of military leader for Stalin. He is without the slightest political ambition and proved his value as Chief of the General Staff before he had barely reached the age of forty. His appearance is deceptive; he looks more like a Hollywood film star than a Russian Marshal; in fact, his only relaxation, apart from chess, is a visit to the cinema.

Under the Minister of Defence come the two active officers, the Chief of the General Staff (an appointment vacant since Colonel-General Shtemenko left that post to command the 'Southern Front') and the Chief of the Land Forces, Marshal Koniev.

Next in importance rank the various Inspector Generals of the Red Army. Marshal Bogdanov is in command of all armoured formations, assisted by Colonel-General Salamantine as Chief of Staff. A senior officer attached to this staff is Marshal Rotmistrov, the Fuller or de Gaulle of the Soviet tank force. He wrote the famous treatise called *The Use of Tanks in Mountain Warfare* and many other military text-books.

The artillery branch, ranking uppermost in the structure of the Red Army and maintaining a high standard of efficiency for which the Tsarist Army was already renowned, is headed by two Marshals, Voronov and Jakovlev, the latter with strong attachments to the inner circle in the Kremlin and the NKDV chief, Beria.

The inspectorate for infantry falls under the C-in-C Land Forces. The entire organisation and its personnel, perhaps with the exception of Marshal Jakovlev, is absolutely non-political and leaves education of troops and similar matters to the political commissars, as the directives from the Kremlin order. However, this one-sided political indoctrination, with the consequently evident disinterest, is compensated by the existence of Marshal Bulganin. Bulganin was a Deputy Prime Minister until recently and now commands the 'Western Front', which includes Russia's best and most important troops. He has a completely political background and counts today as one of the inner circle of the Kremlin. At one time the equivalent of the Lord Mayor of Moscow, this tried and experienced Party Comrade seems to be the only man who can stand up to such powerful men as Beria and Molotov, with whom he is not on the best of terms. His intellectual abilities are not of the highest, but his personal courage is unquestionable, as is his capacity for

alcohol. It was Bulganin who, although a Marshal of the Red Army himself at that time, warned Stalin that Marshal Zhukov's increasing popularity might be dangerous. Zhukov soon afterwards found himself in commands much less important than those which made him famous during the 1941–5 war. Bulganin ranks high as a possible successor to Stalin, although his brusque, if not uncouth, manner has gained him a number of powerful enemies —however, these have to be found in the ranks of the civilians of the Soviet Government and, strangely enough, not in the ranks of the Red Army.

Below this upper class of the Red Army Officers Corps rank the various Army Group Commanders-in-Chief, who, according to the geographical position of their headquarters, may also command the Military Districts of the Soviet Union or the *Voyenny Okrug* which enlist, equip and train the enormous cadres of reserve formations for the regular army.

No. I Army Group is commanded by Marshal Meretzkov, with headquarters at Leningrad. His command comprises eight Rifle Divisions, one Cavalry Division and a General Staff Section. This section is detached from the main organisation in Moscow and is called the 'Skandinavian Section'. It is ominously headed by General Krouglikov who is a regular general in the Forces of the Ministry of the Interior, i.e., Comrade Beria's NKDV; this fully explains the nature of this section. The mobilisation time-table of this Army Group is keyed up to those Groups which are stationed in Eastern Germany, in the Baltic States and in Poland. They can call on trained troops within 24–48 hours and increase their effective strength by a shorter mobilisation plan than any other.

No. II Army Group is commanded by Marshal Timoshenko, with headquarters at Minsk. He controls a number of important sub-headquarters: Kaliningrad (the former Koenigsberg in East Prussia) commanded by General Garbatov, the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Forces, Marshal Rokkossovsky and forces in Czechoslovakia. Whoever has command of Army Group II in case of war, and it is doubtful whether the all-too-popular Timoshenko would be left there, will assume over-all command in the West, i.e., of the 'Western Front'. Marshal Bulganin might fill that post at the moment but he can hardly command a battalion, let alone the most powerful Army Group in the Red Army. The Military District of Minsk reverts in case of war to the rôle of Vojenny Okrug, i.e., a recruiting basin for reservists, conscripts and volunteers from White Russia. This Group comprises a force of ten Rifle Divisions and three Cavalry Divisions in its cantonments proper, i.e., without those sub-headquarters attached to it.

No. III Army Group is commanded by Colonel-General Greczko, with headquarters at Kiev. This Army Group controls a subsidiary Army Group of less importance under the command of Colonel-General Kurasov which is stationed in the Balkans. The wartime arrangements are almost identical with those for Army Group No. II at Minsk. The Group numbers seventeen Rifle Divisions and six Cavalry Divisions. It was this Group which was handed to Marshal Zhukov after his popularity had caused Marshal Bulganin so much concern. An important local commander within this group is General Puchov, unlikely ever to compete with Marshal Zhukov or anybody else in popularity.

No. IV Army Group is commanded by Marshal Bagramian, with headquarters at Tiflis. The Group is responsible for all military operations against the Middle East in case of war. Its peacetime strength is comparatively small, i.e., six Rifle Divisions, two Cavalry Divisions only, but two important reserve districts would supply the Group in case of war; they are the North Caucasus and Trans Caucasus Reserve Commands.

No. V Army Group has its headquarters at Tashkent. This Group faces India and Afghanistan. A great handicap for this Group was the lack of lateral communications, i.e., from the Caspian Sea to Tibet. North-south communications had been provided by the Turksib Railway completed twenty years ago, and which links part of Asiatic Russia with the West. Since 1945 a vertical system of communications, almost exclusively reserved for strategic

purposes, has been completed. It is a railway starting from Kransovodsk on the Caspian opposite Baku over Ashkhabad to Mary (the old Merv) where a branch line runs straight south to the Afghan border opposite Herat. The main line continues farther east over Chardzon-Bukhara-Samarkand-Leninabad-Kokand to Osh in the Kirgiz Republic at a point nearest to the Pamir Plateau. Altogether three branch lines point south towards Afghanistan and India. The completion of this system has permitted this Army Group to concentrate its components and rely on fast movement rather than numbers. Consequently only five Rifle Divisions and three Cavalry Divisions are stationed here. The bulk of the Reserve go to Europe, where they form crack regiments.

No. VI Army Group is commanded by Marshal Malinovsky, with headquarters at Chita between the Baikal Lake and Manchuria. Unlike other Army Groups, No. VI has special Red Banner Armies as components. There are three of these—No. 1 Red Banner Army, headquarters at Vladivostock, covering the area between that port and Nikolsk; No. 2 Red Banner Army covering the area Khabarovsk-Blagoveshensk, and No. 3 Red Banner Army from the Amur to Lake Baikal, including the outer Mongolian Command at Ulan Bator.

This Army Group is completely independent of supplies of any description from Western Russia. A strong colonisation policy aims at independence in educated manpower as well. Officers and men settling in the area of this Group are granted special privileges, and even the stringent economic measures which Communism enforces are somewhat relaxed. As a result, a new type of Russian officer appears in these Far Eastern units. He fears his political commissar less. He knows that the hand of the Kremlin is far off and hardly ever reaches Chita. It is typical that the Commanding General at Khabarovsk, when ordered to repair and enlarge the 'Tochitka Line' (a static defence line running along the Manchurian border in the shape of small strong points), simply ignored this order from Chita, knowing that Marshal Malinovsky had never issued such an order, but that it originated from some desk general in Moscow, who had probably forgotten that the Tockitkas were originally constructed against the Japanese in 1932 and had since fallen into decay beyond repair. The Group numbers twelve Rifle Divisions and four Cavalry Divisions and draws on two military districts, i.e., the Maritime Territory opposite Japan and the combined Chita-Khabarovsk district, bringing its total within a rather prolonged space of time to three times its present strength.

In addition to the above six Army Groups, the following Military Districts are in existence: Moscow (12 Divisions), Ural (8 Divisions), Volga (6 Divisions) and an independent Arctic Command. The above 26 Active Service Divisions represent the mass of manoeuvre or strategic counterweight which plays a large part in Russian strategic planning.

Thus, then, the Land Forces of the Soviet Union comprise approximately 90 Rifle Divisions and 20 Cavalry Divisions. To this must be added an artillery support organised on 35 Divisions and Corps troops, to the equivalent of another 20 Divisions, making a grand total of 165 Divisions or two million men. As has been shown, various Army Groups could call on immediate first-rank reserves, without setting in motion the rather cumbersome apparatus of general mobilisation to the extent of another 80 Divisions for which equipment, supplies and officers are immediately ready. The larger part of this mass of Divisions is under arms and its complete union with the Army is expected to be before the start of the Spring manoeuvres.

Any serious student of Russian military policy must calculate this first-rank reserve as an immediate force and not as a strategic reserve or potential. Considering that the Red Fleet numbers 300,000 officers and men and the Soviet Air Force some 750,000 officers and men, it would be more accurate to estimate over four million men under arms in Soviet Russia than the two or three million which have been mentioned by responsible authorities in Western Europe and America.

MANNERISM

PAUL WENGRAF

POLITICALLY and culturally the fifteenth century was a time of splendour for Italy, when science and art emerged into autonomy from their subordination to religion. It could well look upon itself as an age of reason and liberation. The sixteenth century, till well into its first half, still believed itself to be on the same road forward—away from the tight, collective economy of the Middle Ages towards free enterprise and political progress, personified in those enlightened princes whose highly-cultured Courts seemed to embody the hopes and visions of the intelligentsia. By now, however, this optimism was losing its basis in reality. Rome was sacked in 1527; the plague raged endlessly; the Spanish soldateska raped and plundered their way through the peninsula and, in 1530, Charles V established Spanish hegemony over it; the small Courts collapsed one by one, among them that of the Florentine Medici, who went bankrupt. And in 1542 the Inquisition was introduced. The dreams of the Renaissance humanists came to an end.

This was the climate which nourished the style of painting known as Mannerism. The style was predominant in Italy from 1520 to 1600; elsewhere it caught on somewhat later and endured until 1620. Its name derives from the Italian *a la maniera di* . . . Actually the word is misleading because, for some time now, art historians have used it to designate this particular style, whereas the general public gives it its original meaning, applying it to any work of art which seems unnatural and affected, whatever period it may belong to. Here the word is employed in its historical sense to denote the principal trend in the art of the later sixteenth century.

Mannerism in its beginnings can be exemplified by the National Gallery picture, 'Joseph in Egypt', by Jacopo Pontormo (Illus. 1). This painter, whose real name was Carucci, was born in 1494 in Pontormo near Empoli and in 1507 went to Florence, where he lived and worked for most of his life. The picture in the National Gallery is one of a series which was his first great work, probably painted about 1518, two years before the death of Raphael. It is strangely different from the art of the Renaissance, with its classical stability and symmetry. Compared with the harmonious composition of any of Raphael's works—except for the very last ones—its design is confused and disturbing. The main part of the action, the reception of Joseph by Pharaoh, is relegated to the lower left-hand corner; parts of it take place in the background, other parts elsewhere. To spread out the story in this way had been a common practice of Italian artists of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries; but there the diffusion of the story over the entire panel produced an ornamental pattern. Pontormo's picture, on the contrary, is given a predominant rhythm by the diagonal of a staircase which sweeps in a grandiose curve from the right foreground up to the horizon. A superb counter-movement—provided by an old man at the head of the stairway bending down to meet the ascending Benjamin—receives the sweeping curve; but the upward surge comes to an end higher still in the cool stone statue of a youth on a pedestal. This young god, or whatever he may be, comes as a surprise. Renaissance painters readily used motives from antiquity, but whereas they co-ordinated them with their subjects, Pontormo's marble statue has no bearing on the story, nor is it part of a congenial background. It is there as a deliberate contradiction to the emotional content of the picture. Still, it is functional from a formal point of view, taking up and continuing with grace and dignity the rhythm

of the *cortège* which is floating up the steps. Two other sculptures mingle with the living figures—at the bottom of the staircase a cherub on a plinth, and, almost in the centre of the painting, towering on a high column, another adolescent. If these sculptures were statuesque, we could accept them as relics of antiquity, such as probably abounded in the Italian landscape. But their character is so much like that of the living figures that we might easily believe them to be animated. But sculptures they are and their effect is to produce an embarrassing contradiction in the conception of the picture. This disquieting invasion of the world of the living by the inorganic is characteristic of Mannerist art. None of its trends is more revealing of its meaning. We find it again in Bedoli's 'Allegory of the Immaculate Conception' in the Pinacoteca at Parma (Illus. 2), in Giuli Romano's 'Madonna with Saints' in Santa Maria dell' Anima, Rome, and in other works beyond number. Insistently lifeless architecture, with or without sculpture, forms an unrelated back-ground in many Mannerist paintings and always with the same purpose—to serve as an antithesis to the emotion which the picture sets out to transmit. The streets and arches in the background of Bronzino's portrait of Bartolommeo Panciatichi lead nowhere and, in a disturbing way, mean nothing, while the figure itself is cold and smooth and motionless as marble: Bronzino has made a statue of a human being. But sometimes he reverses this process of death breaking into life, as we have seen Pontormo do in his animated statues. The masks in Bronzino's 'Allegory' in the National Gallery (Illus. 3) are not as dead as masks ought to be: they have a ghostly animation which has nothing to do with the usual conventional expression of macabre humour. No more striking discord could cut through a work of art than these self-contradictions in Mannerist pictures. These are quite different from the comparable dissonances found in Romantic art—the irony of Heine who indulges in melancholy and sentimentality at the beginning of a poem, only to make vulgar fun of them at the poem's end. The Mannerists are free of such irony: they are morbid in their icy coldness.

But where else do we find life invaded in this way by death, and the inorganic endowed with life? In Giorgio de Chirico's 'Hector and Andromache', the wife clings to the departing husband so tenaciously that he is unable to release himself from her dragging weight. So heavy is she that the stylised folds of her garment have been turned into stone; she herself has become stone: she is a statue. As to Hector, the shape and position of his legs are those of a ballet dancer about to take flight. But apart from the arm on his wife's shoulder, which still has in it something of human feeling, he is not a creature of flesh and blood, but a lay-figure. And then we notice that a theatre curtain frames the action: it is not two people in an incident of their lives that we are looking at, but—at best—actors on a stage. A story is told and at the same time denied, an emotion expressed and simultaneously almost caricatured, by the transformation of the persons who suffer it, into a statue and a lay-figure in a dancer's pose. Yet, not quite a statue and not quite a dancer—there are residues of humanity. The connection with, and probably derivation from, the sixteenth-century Mannerists is palpable. Italian as he is, de Chirico must have seen the innumerable late Renaissance pictures in his country's museums and churches. Affinities with them appear in many of his works. In the 'Disquieting Muses' (Illus. 4), the perspective, the buildings in the right-hand background, the dramatic sky and the slightly animated sculpture on the right—all this could be a modern painter's paraphrase of a Mannerist theme: except for the ghostly statues which dominate the picture. The seated figures look in part like a woman and in part like a dressmaker's dummy (anticipating Henry Moore, whose 'Three Standing Figures', incidentally, frequently echo the actual forms of the 'Disquieting Muses'). The standing figure with the conical head—reminiscent of some technical instrument—and antique drapery over her bare shoulder is statue, pedestal, dummy and living flesh, all at the same time. The tragical solemnity of the picture is challenged from within by the introduction of the absurd and the grotesque—just as in sixteenth-century Mannerism;

'Hector and Andromache' was painted about 1918, four hundred years after Pontormo's 'Joseph in Egypt'; the 'Disquieting Muses' was painted about 1922. Meanwhile, in 1921, there was published Pirandello's play, ***Six Characters in Search of an Author***, a work closely related to the art of de Chirico and of the Surrealists. For the play is a sophisticated confusion of theatre and actors with 'real' life and 'real' people, leading up to the one question: 'What is Reality?'

The problems of the Mannerists and those of Pirandello, de Chirico and the Surrealists were not very different. The Surrealists aimed to present a Super-reality more real and going deeper into human life than the visible top-layer commonly called Reality. The sixteenth-century Mannerists—who were even nearer to Pirandello—were intent to present life and reality at the same level, as imitations of life in art, each reflecting the other in such a way that the image and what it reflected became a unity and their separation apparently arbitrary. Consequently, Mannerism and Surrealism alike found their visions in the borderland between life and images (mirrors) of life, or in dreams.

It was in 1601, when Northern Europe was still dominated by Mannerism, that *Hamlet* was published. Hamlet's self-conscious, introspective character fits neither into the Renaissance nor into the Baroque, each of which, in its own way, accepted life as something to be lived, not questioned. 'To be or not to be', and 'We are such stuff as dreams are made on', reveal an attitude peculiar to Mannerism —an attitude of insecurity. The period of the Reformation and counter-Reformation could be called an 'Age of Anxiety', the name which Auden has given to our time. So the affinity between Mannerism and Surrealism is not superficial. Both movements originate in a deeply perturbed world. Both seek escape from fear in an artificial detachment, from horror in a still more horrific coldness of texture and surface. A picture by Tanguy or Dali and a picture by Bronzino have a very similar appearance: brilliant, precise, 'depersonalised'. Both movements exploit a special flavour of sensuality. Michelangelo's beautiful adolescents and slaves —not effeminate, but eminently desirable —and titanic women—more virile than men could be—were prototypes for most of the Mannerist painters. Only, Michelangelo's sensuality was sublimated into grandeur, whereas Mannerist sensuality is precious and affected. Ravishing though they are, there is something unhealthy about the long-limbed, small-headed boyish girls and girlish boys of Beccafumi, Mazzola, Pontormo and their followers, the perfumed Madonnas and angels of Parmiggiano, the frigid aristocrats of Bronzino. The Surrealists, however, openly sadistic and vicious, macabre and perverted, are full of wit and humour, while the Mannerists, heirs to Michelangelo's *terribiltà*, are in deadly earnest about everything. Both periods are panic-stricken, but ours, having no valid and binding code of values, is by far the more cynical.

Mannerism was a highbrow movement, much as Surrealism was for our generation. Nervous and refined, it was a movement of intellectuals for intellectuals. But it was a reactionary movement within its own period. Tied up with a society which was losing its power, it tried to preserve something that could not survive—the already posthumous splendour of the small Renaissance Courts. Art lags behind in following the historic course of events, not least because it takes time for those in power to realise they have lost it. The Mannerists, who doubtless thought they were in the vanguard of cultural progress, were in fact progressing into a cul-de-sac, like the Surrealists in our time. It was not just that the form used by these two movements was incapable of development: their emotional preoccupations also led to a dead end. Fear, lasciviousness, cruelty, can nourish art, but the growth of an art that feeds on these alone cannot but be stunted. It is this lack of sympathetic human emotion in that art called Mannerist that has given this word its connotation of affectation and artificiality.

Mannerism, thanks to this elegance and brilliance, spread rapidly throughout Europe after 1550. By this time, the

Jacopo Pontormo *Joseph in Egypt*

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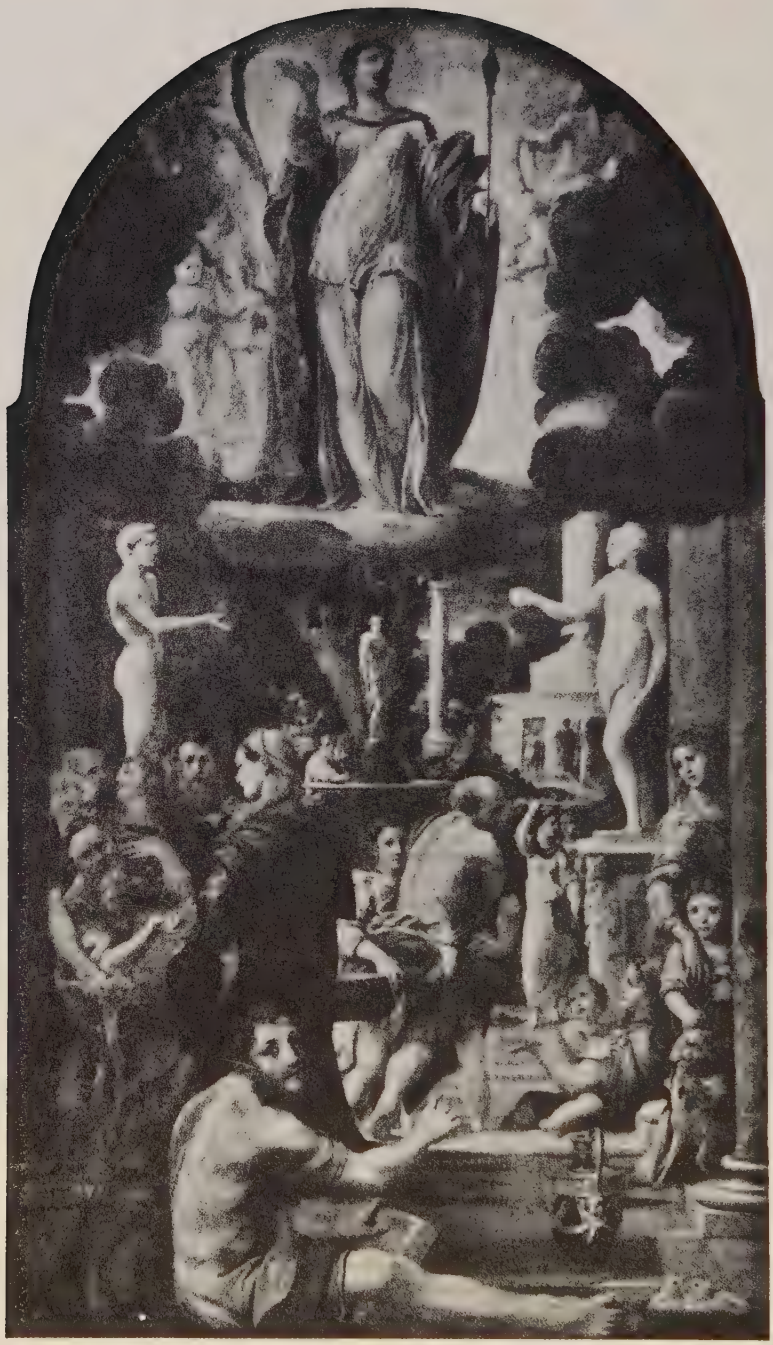
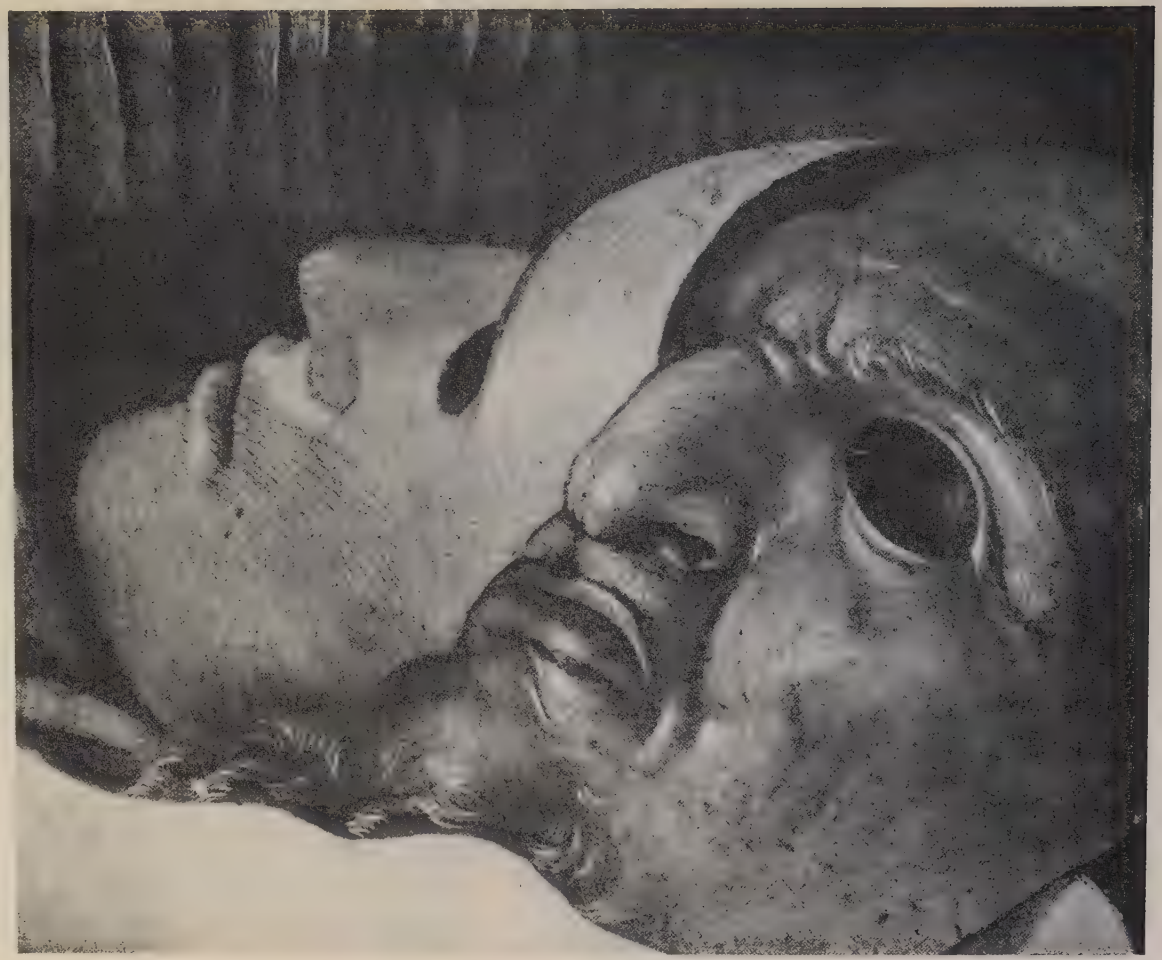


Bedoli *Allegory of the Immaculate Conception (1533)*



Bronzino: Detail of the Allegory

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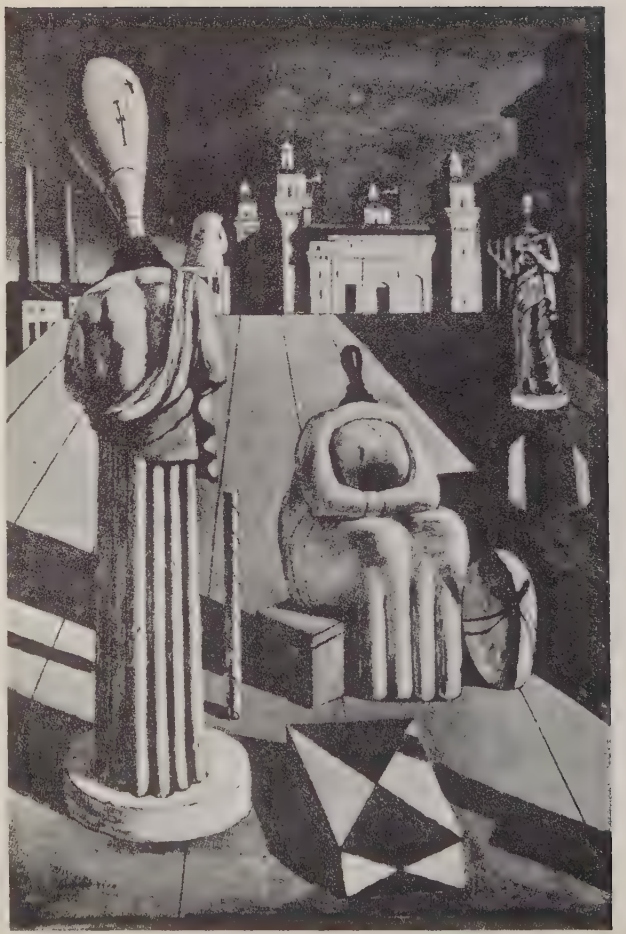
De Chirico — *Hector and Andromache (1918)*



De Chirico — *The Disquieting Muses (c. 1922)*

luxurious Court of Francis I had already attracted Benvenuto Cellini (whose famous gold salt-cellar was made for Francis I), Niccolo del'Abbate and many more artists from Italy, and numerous others from the Netherlands. The Italian masters who had sat at the feet of Raphael and Michelangelo were greatly honoured as the *avant-garde* of European art. The soil had been prepared for them by Leonardo da Vinci, the enigmatic old man who in 1519 had died near Amboise in France. Mannerism in France had its centre in Fontainebleau, the seat of the Court. The School of Fontainebleau produced, in such works as the portrait of 'Diane de Poitiers', the most seductive and ravishing, though not the greatest, pictures of the later sixteenth century. Its emphasis on line and use of ornamental detail shows how the Gothic tradition extended itself into the post-Renaissance style of Mannerism.

Gothic elements are also evident in the works of the many Flemish painters who, between 1560 and 1620, carried Mannerism into Northern Europe. In adopting this exaggerated style, they exaggerated it still further. Their use of foreshortening, their contorted figures, exceed anything attempted by an Italian in imitation of Michelangelo. The result was as absurd and eclectic as it was daring and attractive.

This last aftermath of Mannerism lingered on until about 1620. At the Court of Rudolph II in Prague, Flemish and German artists, such as Spranger and Rottenhammer, produced pictures which are the height of refinement and of superficiality. By now, Mannerism had become so polished as to be nothing but brilliant and sensual: little had survived of its intellectual, rather sombre, beginnings, a hundred years before, with Pontormo. Its 'metaphysical' content had come to be overshadowed by its surface qualities—the elegant line, the cold, bright colour, the enamelled finish. Meanwhile, Caravaggio, born in 1560, was carrying out a revolution in painting. By the time he died, aged thirty-six, Caravaggio had created the down-to-earth dramatic realist style without which Rembrandt, Rubens and Velazquez are unthinkable.

This is the style which we call Baroque and which dominated the next hundred years in European art.

Baroque, no less than Mannerism, had its roots in the Italian Renaissance. But, where Mannerism is detached and artificial, Baroque is exuberant and earthy. The people in Baroque paintings, be they Dutch, Flemish, Italian, Spanish, are real people: their gestures may be ecstatic, operatic, but they are of the earth; their rôles may be those of Biblical saints or Olympian deities, but their appearance is that of the ordinary being, plebeian or bourgeois, whom the artist saw about him in the streets.

The vigorous, dramatic realism of Baroque corresponded perfectly with all that was new in the spirit of this century which saw the rise of capitalism. Its determination to come to grips with reality was natural enough in an age of philosophical empiricism which made unprecedented progress in the natural sciences. Its dramatic vehemence served the purposes of the counter-Reformation in the Catholic countries, Italy, Spain, Flanders. Yet, paradoxically, it would seem, it was an equally valid means of artistic expression for Calvinist Holland, where the ideas of Protestant humanism, that man must come into direct contact with God, without the mediation of priests and dogma, and that that contact sanctified his individuality, found consummate expression in Rembrandt, the greatest of the Baroque masters. Mannerism was the death-rattle and expiring sigh of mediaeval feudalism. The Baroque, in all the variety of its manifestations, rendered visible the experiences and aspirations of the age which created the modern world.

THE SULTAN AND THE CRISIS IN MOROCCO

ROM LANDAU

It is due entirely to France that since 1912 Morocco has been transformed from a mediaeval State to a modern one; but it is to the present Sultan, Mohammed V, that a people, who for hundreds of years had no sense of unity and no national consciousness, owe the miracle of their forging into a united and self-conscious nation. Moorish history of the last few hundred years is a blend of inner warfare, tribal particularism and incessant conflicts between the Sultan's central authority and the medley of little chieftains, pashas and caids. Today, except for the notorious Pasha of Marrakesh[1] and a few tribal chieftains in the still very primitive south, most native leaders, both spiritual and secular, not only acknowledge the Sultan as their only legitimate ruler but look up to him with a respect verging on veneration. As a Moorish friend recently wrote to me, 'It is the first time for 400 years that we have a real Sultan.'

Yet it is not so very long since the Sultan was regarded as a colourless figure, a mere tool in the hands of the French authorities who, in 1927, had put him on the Sharifian throne. The Moorish Sultanate is not necessarily inherited by the eldest son. When, in 1927, the Sultan Moulay Yussef died, the French selected not his eldest son, but one of the younger ones—Mohammed, for he seemed to them the least likely to oppose their plans. For a number of years their choice appeared to be justified. Mohammed V was a mere figurehead, all the effective power being wielded by the French Résident Général. In the days of Moulay Yussef, and so long as Marshal Lyautey was alive, this arrangement worked well, for Lyautey, as the first Résident, implemented with fairness the clauses of the Franco-Moorish treaty of 1912 by which the Protectorate was established. Moreover, he was genuinely eager to improve the lot of the natives. But soon after his pitiful dismissal in 1925, things began to change. Originally the main purpose of the Protectorate was to lead the Moors along the path of progress towards a restoration of full sovereignty. But gradually Morocco came to be regarded as an annexe to France and a supplement to French economy. French business men and *colons* began to flood the country, which also became a paradise for French *fonctionnaires*, ranging from Governors to taxi-drivers and postmen. The authorities were said to pay greater attention to the interests of their fellow-countrymen than to those of the Moors; and while countless Frenchmen were enriching themselves, the Moors remained practically as poor as ever.

Naturally French rule and the excellent work initiated by Lyautey profited Morocco greatly. Fine harbours, roads and railway lines were built, schools and hospitals erected, agricultural methods improved, mineral resources exploited. But little was done to implement the promise of training the natives for home-rule, although it must be borne in mind that the treaty of 1912 did not deprive Morocco of her sovereignty. It merely established a protectorate that was to *assist*, and not to rule, the Sultan and his own government. In actual fact, neither the Sultan nor his *makhzen* ever had (or have) much power, and in 1951 the effective administration rests as securely in French hands as it did in 1912—perhaps even more securely.

For a long time the Sultan watched the situation silently, and went on doing as he was instructed. He was kept away from all foreign contacts and, beyond his personal

[1] Thami el Glaoui, who recently entertained Mr. Churchill, is the second power in the land and the chief representative of Moorish feudalism

entourage, his only sources of information were those provided by the French. But during the late war things began to change. The Sultan met Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill and other allied leaders. He also knew that one of the objects of the war, in which thousands of his own people were fighting and dying, was to rid the world of despotism and to restore the freedom of oppressed nations. When the war ended, he hoped that France would give his people a greater measure of self-rule and make a genuine attempt at training them for independence. But France did nothing, and Morocco's status became increasingly that of a French dependency.

The Sultan was not the only one who looked on helplessly at the course of events; all Moorish patriots shared his profound disappointment. But, unhampered by the fetters of rank, they were resolved to act. Various nationalist parties sprang up, and in spite of French efforts to suppress them, in spite of the frequent arrests and banishments of the leaders, the nationalist movement kept growing. Today it is embodied chiefly in the Istiqlal Party, led by Alal el Fassi, member of one of the country's noblest families, a former professor of the ancient Karaouine University at Fez, and, in the eyes of the patriots, a martyr and leader.

It was inevitable that the Sultan and the nationalists should gravitate towards one another. Both wished to see the present autocratic methods replaced by a more democratic system, with greater solicitude for native interests, and a firm prospect of ultimate independence. It became equally inevitable that all patriotically-minded Moors should come to acknowledge the Sultan as their supreme leader, and to sympathise with his dilemma; for they knew that, in his efforts on their behalf, he was often brought into conflict with the Résidence, and that his position was one of the utmost difficulty.

Of course, the patriotism of the Sultan and of the nationalists was a thorn in the flesh of the Protectorate, which did everything in its power to discredit both. The most famous example of such attempts was the action of the authorities at the end of 1950, when they sent old Glaoui to the palace at Rabat and made him 'expose' the Communist and anti-religious tendencies of the Sultan's nationalist friends. Not surprisingly, Glaoui's action evoked profound resentment throughout the entire country. As a descendant of the Prophet, the Sultan is sacred in the eyes of his people; moreover, he is held in the highest regard for his great piety. And all but the wilfully deaf and blind know that the Istiqlal Party is founded upon the principle of loyalty to Islam. As for Communist 'collaboration', that bogey exists only in the imagination of the enemies of the nationalists; even if we charitably suppose that the bogey is real, and not just a cynical exploitation of the present dread of this ruthless ideology. In spite of all the advances the Communists have been making, the Istiqlal has remained radically opposed to any dealings with them: its religious, monarchic and democratic tenets make it impossible for it to act otherwise.

But we must go back in our story, at least a few months, back to the autumn of 1950 when the Sultan paid his famous state-visit to France, during which he made a formal request for a revocation of the protectorate treaty. Under the pressure of French 'business' in Morocco, the Government in Paris felt unable to promise more than a few reforms within the old framework. But the Sultan considered that thirty-eight years had furnished plenty of time for piecemeal reforms, and the moment had arrived for a fundamental revision in Franco-Moorish relations.

By making an official request for independence, the Sultan had for the first time focussed world attention on a matter which France had preferred to keep in the background. For the world was to believe that perfect harmony existed between the two countries. Moreover, the Sultan's request brought the problem of independence into the open in Morocco itself, and even French censorship could suppress it no longer. For it must be mentioned that censorship in Morocco is hardly less severe than behind the Iron Curtain. Each day the leading Arab paper is disfigured by large blank spaces, representing the suppressed portions of mangled articles.

In the new atmosphere created by the Sultan's visit to France, events began to

move fast. In the *Conseil du Gouvernement*, two native deputies expressed sharp criticism of the Protectorate and, in consequence, found themselves evicted permanently from the Chamber by General Juin, who, with his genius for combining half a dozen different offices in his person, is also President of the Chamber. Nine other leading native deputies followed their colleagues voluntarily. The Sultan instantly received them all in official audience. His action could have but one interpretation: he was proclaiming to the world the breach between the Palace and the Résidence. It was, in fact, in reply to this 'affront' on his part that the authorities delegated their willing tool, Glaoui, to make his demonstration at the Palace a few weeks later. Practically all the Ulemas of Morocco instantly sent delegations to Rabat to protest against Glaoui's *démarche*, and to assure the Sultan of their loyal support. Now that even the spiritual leaders had openly made common cause with their ruler, there could no longer be any doubt that he was the one and only symbol of Moorish nationalism. As such, he represented everything his opponents are determined to fight.

The Résident Général has the power to depose the Sultan, a course which, indeed, he seems to have threatened to take early this year. But to remove the Sultan from the throne is a risky undertaking. And who is to replace Mohammed V? It is not likely that the French choice would fall on his eldest son, Prince Moulay Hassan, for his nationalist sympathies are even more pronounced than those of his father, and his popularity with the natives is quite as great. Of course some puppet out of the large Sharifian family could be chosen, but it is questionable whether the country would accept such a choice without violent protest.

It may be asked how it came about that the once perfect relations between France and Morocco should have deteriorated into this present tension. There are many answers to this question, but they are all overshadowed by two main factors: first, that the Morocco of 1951 is not identical with that of 1912, and the second, that after waiting thirty-nine years for a definite promise of independence and seeing it to be as remote as ever, the Moors are reaching the limits of their patience.

Another contributing and more accidental cause is the personality of the Résident. Juin is a famous general, respected throughout the world for his soldierly qualities; but he is not a Lyautey. He believes in rule through force, and having been given practically *carte blanche* by the French Government, he has tried to keep down Moorish patriotism by intimidation. The Sultan and his advisers are convinced that time is on their side, and that sooner or later France will have to follow the example established by Great Britain in India, Burma and Ceylon. General Juin, on the other hand, is loath even to contemplate such a possibility. He is genuinely convinced that strong French rule is of the greatest benefit to the Moors, and refuses to acknowledge the potential force inherent in the nationalism of dependent peoples. Since his argument is supported by tanks and guns, he can claim to hold all the trumps in his hands, for the Sultan has no corresponding assets with which to oppose him. Materially, he is completely powerless. All he can count on is his own faith, his own and his people's conviction of the righteousness of their cause, and the love of the Moorish nation.

We cannot at present foresee how the struggle will end—but one thing is certain: the only power which in the long run can derive profit from the French attitude in Morocco is Communist Russia.

Since this article was written, events in Morocco have been moving fast. But though the Sultan was forced to accept all the conditions imposed upon him by General Juin, and a temporary lull has succeeded the excitement of recent months, Morocco's central issue has been left untouched, and all the latent problems still await their solution

An essay on Stendhal and the political novel he left unfinished and unrevised at his death. This novel, which is known in France as Lucien Leuwen *and could not be published there during his lifetime for political reasons, has now been translated into English under one of the most picturesque titles Stendhal thought of giving it*—The Green Huntsman

LUCIEN LEUWEN

V. S. PRITCHETT

HENRI Beyle, the name behind one hundred and seventy pseudonyms, died in 1842. The signature, Stendhal, is the most famous of these masks. Balzac had called him a master, but, neglected by the great public, Stendhal said with his well-known dryness that he had taken out a lottery ticket for fame which would not be drawn until 1935. This remarkable prophecy has been, perhaps, too much quoted as an example of his short-bitten pride and perspicacity. Stendhal was inclined to curt, theatrical guesses: he had also mentioned that he would be famous in 1880, which he certainly was not. But it is a fact that, a hundred years after his death, all would put aside the old opinion that he was a critical rather than a creative mind, a clinical or anecdotal psychologist rather than a novelist, and some have thought him the greatest novelist French literature has known.

When we pick up novels like *La Chartreuse de Parme*, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, *Lucien Leuwen* or *La Vie de Henri Brulard*, our immediate impression is indeed of something like a contemporary mind. Stendhal does abruptly cut through the nineteenth century to the present day. The clear, hard, dry style—based, as he said, in another well-known phrase, on the Code Napoleon—has the emotional shortness and economy which we associate with the scientific spirit, though why we should do so, I do not know: opacity and woolliness are much commoner in scientific writing. His notion that life is to be lived as a conscious experiment, his admiration of passion and sensibility, his belief in personal relations, his sexual curiosity, his detachment, his irreligion, his view that a novel should delineate not the conditions but 'the soul' of an age, make him contemporary. And to these characteristics, we must add the seductive fact that Stendhal lived through times very similar to our own and made it his main business to discover what attitude an intelligent man ought to have to his historical situation.

Revolution, European war, the dispelling of revolutionary hope, the rise of a new class to power, a class (in his opinion) stolid and hypocritical in their mediocrity, were the elements of Stendhal's situation. On the surface the similarity with our own is close, but it is deceptive; to take one important difference only, Stendhal lived on the edge of a period of peace, prosperity and absorbing technical advance. A child of the Napoleonic age, he believed in power and action; and although Napoleon had failed and Stendhal felt himself to be an outsider in his own time, the period was about to gratify the desire for power and action on an undreamed-of scale. He was an embittered figure, but the tide was flowing, and was not, as it seems to us, on the ebb. His successors would be preaching not the superior man (which he claimed to be), but the superman. Stendhal could not know this. And whereas we who, after a similar history of revolution, war and disillusion, face the destruction of our life and, imprisoned like stokers in the hold of a torpedoed ship, cannot escape the common fate, Stendhal was able to take up a position of superiority and irony outside the society that offered him nothing.

He felt himself to be free; we feel ourselves to be prisoners. If educated people have taken something like Stendhal's attitude in the modern world—and a number noticeably do—it is far more difficult for

them, in our conditions, than it was for him in his. To that point I shall return.

Only two novels of Stendhal's are well-known to English readers in translation: *La Chartreuse de Parme* and *Le Rouge et le Noir*. The rest of his work, except the essay on love, has been neglected by translators, until the *Memoirs of an Egotist* was done last year. Now the first part of the political novel he left unfinished and—most important—unrevised after his death, has been done into English under one of the more picturesque titles Stendhal thought of giving to the book: *The Green Huntsman*. It is known in France as *Lucien Leuwen* and could not be published in his lifetime for political reasons. The novel is an exposure of the contempt Stendhal felt for the régime which employed him as French Consul in Civita Vecchia. M. André Gide has said that he begins to think *Lucien Leuwen* the best of all Stendhal's novels. I personally would not exchange it for the first chapters of *Le Rouge et le Noir* or anything in *La Chartreuse*.

To come to any conclusion at all about Stendhal is difficult, because we first have to get rid of the distracting figure of Stendhal himself. He is one of those novelists who have a 'legend' or a 'case', and they speak to us in two voices. There is the voice of the writer and there is the voice of the man standing outside the book in the midst of his life. And it may not even be the voice of the man but of some persona or mask, some projection of himself such as, in English literature, we have seen in writers as different as Stevenson, Lawrence and Yeats. The distraction is serious because the case of Stendhal has the perennial advantage of life over literature and it has often been said that there are more Beylists than there are admirers of his novels. It is Stendhal's own doing. He was an egotist by conviction. In his books of travel, in his journals, in his letters and his criticism, Stendhal is the perpetual commentator on himself. One is dogged by him as he was in life, a heavy, ugly man, with small, vivacious eyes, a mocking underlip, an often scabrous tongue, vain of his small, delicate hands and of his ballroom leg, timid yet aggressive, liable to brilliance in society yet also liable to sudden failure, inclined to invent scandalous information, a persistent, vocal but not often successful, lover of women. He was continually concerned with his impression, especially his impression in society, and in the quality of it, as if he were an actor in a play. He endeavoured to combine the ironic impenetrability of the man of the world with the intense cultivation of the purest flowering of the soul, and to achieve this uncommon hybrid by careful cerebration beforehand. The kind of curiosity about the self which is found in Montaigne is quite unlike Stendhal's; for Stendhal presents himself with a positive energy, like a producer constructing a character on the stage; he analyses so that he may act with feeling, for passion releases the highest human faculties. Whereas the detached inquiries of Montaigne, though no less scientific in spirit, are sceptical and melancholy, passive and humane, Stendhal is in fact a split character, divided between action and contemplation. He had admired Napoleon. He had fought with him in Russia and was a notable administrator in the army and in politics. The best analogy for conveying his nature is one which he used to describe the creation of the characters in *Lucien Leuwen*; they were, so far, he said, skeletons upon which he was building men and women.

Stendhal is a man who has made a break with the life that has been given him, and has decided by force of intellect and will to make a new life that will fit him for dominance in the world he finds about him. It is the break in Stendhal's life that gives him so much of his personal interest to us, for during the last 150 years, the breaking or uprooting of people has been one of the strongest factors in Western life. There was a private break in Stendhal's life and it was followed by a public break. Stendhal has himself described how, when he was a very young boy, he adored his mother so violently that he could not bear his father to come near her. It is the well-known Oedipean situation. His mother's very early death gave to violence the sanction of grief; he turned in hatred upon his father, and though he was only a child when the Revolution came to Grenoble, he went to the length of trying

to compromise his father with the Terrorists. The family saw this passionate boy as an impossible and criminal monster, without observing that he was a wounded soul.

Stendhal did not recover from the wound. Nor, since it convinced him of his singularity, did he wish to do so. He consciously hardened the scar and never repented. His father was a dry, property-collecting lawyer, and the son, who claimed to inherit from his mother a generous and tumultuous Italian strain, grew up with a contempt for his father's bourgeois life. The private revolt did not send him into the arms of the revolutionaries as it did with some of our own father or mother haters in the 30s. Stendhal hated the conventions of provincial life, and despised the ossified worlds of the 'ultras' and 'legitimists'; but he also hated Voltaire, and he was moved by one canon of the revolutionary doctrine only: the belief in liberty. He regarded equality and fraternity with distaste:

He wrote in *Henri Brulard*, the novel which tells us most about his youth:

> 'I had and still have the most aristocratic of tastes. I would do everything in my power to ensure the happiness of the *peuple*; but I think that I would rather spend a fortnight of each month in prison than have to live with shopkeepers.'

One part of Stendhal's nature was profoundly romantic, or Beyliste; the other part, critical and observant. The Napoleonic idea of glory captured him; but he had seen the defeat in Russia and could not hide from his intelligence the weaknesses of Napoleon. The Emperor's coarseness and lack of respect for culture could no doubt be put down to his provinciality, and could be understood, if not forgiven, as part of the squalor of fate; but his suppression of liberty was unforgivable and he was ruined by the inevitable vice of the tyrant who becomes incompetent through insisting on holding everything in his own hands. A Republican without fortune—for his father cut him off—Stendhal found himself surrounded by the corruption, the inglorious self-seeking and dullness of republican society, and, at last settling with scorn into a minor official job in Italy, he cut himself off spiritually from the world he lived in.

The heroes of Stendhal's novels are, like himself, foreigners in the life they are obliged to enter. They are invaders and they are tacticians; snobs, diplomats, skirmishers in turn, they would be intolerable if they were not redeemed by ingenuousness. Julien Sorel was a working-class youth who, getting out of his class by his brains, working by calculation and ambition, is broken by the rich and his own *amour propre*. Repellently calculating, he is also touching because he is ill-equipped. Fabrice of *La Chartreuse de Parme* is a sort of Candide of the Napoleonic 'gloire' who finds himself caught in the intrigues of a small despotic duchy which is brilliantly managed by a worldly Prime Minister. In an earlier work than either, *Armance*, the hero is isolated by sexual impotence. Lucien Leuwen's isolation is social and political. The main social fact in French life in his time is the unnoticed transfer of political and social power to the bankers. It is they who can make and unmake governments and constitute a third, detached and cynical society which lies between the aristocracy—whom they can buy—who are uselessly intriguing for a return of Charles X, the moderates who support Louis Philippe, and the republicans who terrify both parties by seeming to threaten the return of Jacobinism. Lucien is the son of a rich banker who, when the story opens, has been turned out of the Polytechnic for his part in an anti-monarchist demonstration. His father is a cynical and good-natured man of the world. He dreads 'bores and damp air' more than anything else in the world, and is not disturbed by his son's escapade. What does shock him is his son's puritanism and his political innocence; if Lucien will not take a mistress or abandon his Saint Simonism, the father wonders if life in a provincial garrison will teach him to long for the civilisation he rejects. So Lucien gets a commission in a cavalry regiment in Nancy. There we find this simple, natural, rich and insolent young man applying himself to the study of provincial society.

Nancy is a boring place; its society is split into factions; there is no conversation.

Definition of the provinces: the place where people bawl their opinions and do not answer one another. Lucien is an engaging youth, for his unformed character is composed of the naïve cunning, the knowing humour and the inexperience, tetchiness and pride of youth. He can never be sure of his performance in society. The garrison is jealous of his wealth, and he throws his weight about in a way one cannot but find tiresome, though Stendhal is delighted. The regiment is out of humour because its officers are ridiculed in the drawing-rooms. He himself has a republican reputation to live down. He fights a duel, gets himself into 'ultra' or aristocratic society by going to church with his tongue in his cheek; consorts with the party spies; the young bloods envy his wealth and despise him socially; he falls ingenuously and romantically in love with Madame Chastellar, a rich, young, aristocratic widow and is tricked out of happiness by a grotesque plot of the young 'bloods'. The second part of the book, which has not yet been translated, describes his heart-broken return to Paris where his amiable father gets him a job with a Cabinet Minister who has begun gambling on the Bourse. (This is a wonderful portrait.) Lucien has now to test his greenness in the corruption of party politics. He has promised his father to silence his idealism for six months. Once more, he adopts youthful cynicism and cunning. He goes on a brilliantly-described electoral tour, engages open-eyed in a dirty electoral plot, hears the humiliating jeers of the people, and returns to find his father more amiable and cynical than ever, playing cat and mouse with the government. No nonsense about representative government or democracy for the banker. The father, for his own political ends, proposes that the son should take a rich mistress and Lucien allows himself to be led into the affair; but when he discovers that it is a financial and political plot between his father and the woman, his pride is hurt; his belief that he was a free agent is destroyed. By the end of this draft of the novel, Lucien's father has suddenly died bankrupt and Lucien quixotically pays off his creditors and retires in relative poverty. But it is known that Stendhal intended a happy ending; Madame Chastellar, the woman he loved in Nancy, was to meet him again, expose the plot that had separated them, and they were to marry.

The critic of *Lucien Leuwen* has to remember that he is reading a draft, and not the revised version which Stendhal would have published. Possibly the excess of detail and even of ironic commentary which give monotony to the book would have been removed. Stendhal can be said to be guilty of a scientific tendentiousness. Possibly we were to be more convinced, than we are, of the violence of Lucien's and Madame Chastellar's passion. Would Stendhal have retained the preposterous and not very credible plot which broke the love affair? We are asked to believe that Lucien is secreted in an ante-chamber so that he may see a new-born child brought out of Madame Chastellar's room and believe that it is hers by some unknown lover, when really it is a baby borrowed for the occasion by his enemies. The fact is that one of Stendhal's celebrated scabrous anecdotes has been planted in the plot and is quite out of place, and the incident illustrates a lack of judgment which Stendhal displayed in literature, as in his life. No theorist was more often duped. This incident indicates crudely what elsewhere we often feel more subtly in Stendhal: that he wishes to intrude an assumed personal superiority, the shock of his cynical person in the book. The famous ending of *Le Rouge et le Noir* leaves the same uncertainty. Intellectually these episodes may be fitting; imaginatively they do not succeed. The break between brain and heart leads him either into the bizarre or, as Gide has complained, into psychological preciosity. There is a sense of strain in an irony that is so militant in its prompt responses. One knows, in advance, every bee in Stendhal's bonnet.

But the military sense of the timid, wounded, envious and passionate man has given Stendhal an extraordinary sensibility to the unconscious tactical moves of a love-affair. Madame Chastellar makes a great fuss about being compromised—she is very different from the more candidly affectable Madame de Hoqueville—but we have to recall that she has been married

for little more than a year and is only just out of the convent. She is really frightened by the birth of passion, of seeing her habit of reverie turned into reality. And that fear paralyses Lucien too, for he also is a dreamer. To love—Stendhal well knew—is to fear and to be deceived by the imagination twice over; first, in the image one loves, and then by finding that the crucial episodes are not what one imagined they would be. Love is a blind warfare, for both Madame Chastellar and Lucien mis-read each other's words and minds and both think themselves checked in the first manoeuvres, when in fact they are now open to deeper involvement. This kind of comedy—the comedy of truth—Stendhal writes with superlative intelligence and sympathy. The cautious meetings in the drawing-rooms of Nancy with both parties at odds; the scene in the chestnut wood where Lucien opens his dismissing letter, writes two or three replies to it, and then tries to recover the one he thinks is bad, are perfect. They recall to English readers the no less sensitive and strategic art of that other citizen of the same military era, the war artist of the heart, Jane Austen, whose notions of love had been refined—one cannot help feeling—by what she had gathered of naval manoeuvres from her brother.

Stendhal's mastery is in the precision and economy of his observation of people and their movements. One feels the very blinking of the eye that watched them: between two or three blinks they are caught and finely generalised. The movement of a hand, the turn of a head, will be enough. He knows his society. But his great distinction is that, of all novelists, he is the one who can draw a recognisable young man. Youth is the time of dream, calculation, attitude, ambition and a conceit whose whole charm is in its false judgment and its ingenuousness. Never does Stendhal make the common mistake of supposing a priggish, snobbish, arrogant, stand-offish young man is marked by those characteristics for life: the moods change, the blood moves, the dream intervenes, the egotism of innocence changes into the egotism of experience. Lucien, like Julien Sorel, is what one means by a young man, and these characters, though their intellectual skeleton shows through somewhat, are unique in literature. In one sense, it is really because of their youth that they are strangers or foreigners to the world. And their belief is Stendhal's: that only in action and in passionate love are we brought to the height of our faculties.

Before he was very old, Stendhal had certainly written off political action as something likely to do no more than impoverish the heart or the 'âme'—a favourite and romantic word. Without religion, believing in liberty, compounding as best he could with a world he despised and, with the vanity that he was not duped by it, Stendhal is often in ambiguous situations, but he believes in personal relations and—beyond that—in a sublime solitude. Many critics have pointed out how important the notion of 'the heights' is to him, as if the excellence of soul he aimed at, and often so grossly fell short of in his love-affairs or his life, really existed in some rarefied air in which the distant object—always so worshipped by the Romantics—could be seen in sublime clarity.

Stendhal spent most of his life in exile. In Italy he first experienced intoxication of the senses: and then the boredom, loneliness and failure of the expatriate. A very valuable essay on Stendhal by Mr. Martin Turnell in *The Novel in France* has lately suggested that, in the prison-state of our time, the position of Stendhal becomes all the more relevant. This attractive idea seems to me dubious. We cannot escape, even though we are superior beings, from our society, as the Leuwens could from theirs. Caught by what Albert Camus has called in the title of his novel *The Plague*, we have to act and contemplate among others within it. The modern hero lives a double life, not on the heights, but in the exercise yard. He is obliged to understand his fate through the fate of others.

4

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE SCHOOLTEACHER

GEORGE MOOR

Among his dazzling court of clouds the sun shone above the sea, sending his warm golden light into the retreating Nantlle Valley like a chasm between its two flanks of soaring barren rock. The light softly ran over the silver-toned slate and threw up distinctly each feature of tree, barn and meadow. All glowed in warm Octobery Vesper-light. Clear, so that one seemed to see each shrub and rock upon his face, Snowdon smiled at the head of the valley. It was a day to bring a bounce, a spring, into one's step.

Mr. Jones lifted his red soft-fleshed face to the sun, which rayed two burning beams like gigantic searchlights from his spectacles. It was good to be out of the dim school where the sunlight fell on the wrong side, and to be away from teaching 4B Latin. It was a refreshing change, and his walking stick went up and down, jauntily, as they left Tal y Sarn behind them. The form walked docilely, two by two. He had insisted upon that, so that they shouldn't be knocked down by the lorries rushing from the quarries. For all the notice they took of him, they would all have been in hospital by now, but he had given Meirion Hughes a flip on the ears. He liked Meirion, the tough boy of 4B, with muscles like tennis balls, though he knew it was that little runt Peter Parry who was the ringleader. But he was bigger than Parry and smaller himself than Meirion, who could have lain him flat, so he always made a point of subduing Parry through Meirion. Poor Meirion! He was like a cow putting on a silk dress when he tried to learn Latin grammar. And dowl! What use was Latin going to be to him?

But they were quiet, thank God! (except for throwing boulders at the Secondary Modern boys which it was best to ignore).

They streamed on steadily along the valley, to make their annual ascent of Snowdon. He hoped this year that the sun would appear earlier than it did last time. They had waited for the dawn all night, and then nothing but mist.

Nantlle now! He felt the eyes of the world upon him. The boys walked demurely. The minister was talking outside the chapel. He lifted his hat. Once they were in the valley, they could all breathe again. The last outing had brought a spate of letters in the *Herald* about the morale of the modern boy.

Only two more houses.

Then he saw her face, framed among the rosehips and honeysuckle. Her nose came down to her chin which turned up to meet the nose. There was a grey intelligence in her eyes which he didn't like. *Fascinare, malus invidere*, he thought. 'Talk of the evil eye.'

Her finger came through another part of the hedge and pointed at him. All the boys came to a halt, like a train coming into a station, coach bumping coach.

'You!' she said.

He waited, then she hissed through the clear autumn air: 'It is soldiers you are making them.'

He waited, speechless.

'Blind *automata*! Drilling their souls away.'

The boys were delighted, knowing he was in a fix. Why hadn't they told him how to handle situations like this at Aberystwyth Training College? He turned authoritatively to the boys. 'Dis- miss! A rest!'

Reluctantly they obeyed and melted away, to the next corner, all ears. He turned to her again.

'Drill them! Dis- miss!' she mimicked him jeeringly.

'You don't know what boys are,' he began.

She laughed. 'Eight I had, and eight souls they had. Not drill, drill, drill. Dis- miss!' Her mimicry was irritating him.

'Making the valley a drill-yard. In a long line marching them, each with the same sort of cap on his head. It is not the schoolteacher you should be, but a general!'

'Mrs.!' he began.

' Making soldiers of little boys! Pah!'

She hissed like a goose. In the sudden silence following, came the sound of smashed glass. Meirion Hughes and Peter Parry came over the garden wall. Mr. Jones found himself running with the rest of the school. He could hear her calling and hissing: 'My greenhouse! Can't you control them? You!'

Snowdon smiled in the soft sunshine from the head of the valley.

THREE COMPLIMENTS

EDWARD DALY

1

Your eyes is red,
Your nose is blue;
Your ears is like
A kanga ROO!
And now I come
To think of it,
I don't like you
One little bit.

2

Your feet is soft,
Your heart is hard;
Your nails is like
A leo PARD!
And now I come
To think of that,
I'd much prefer
A real cat.

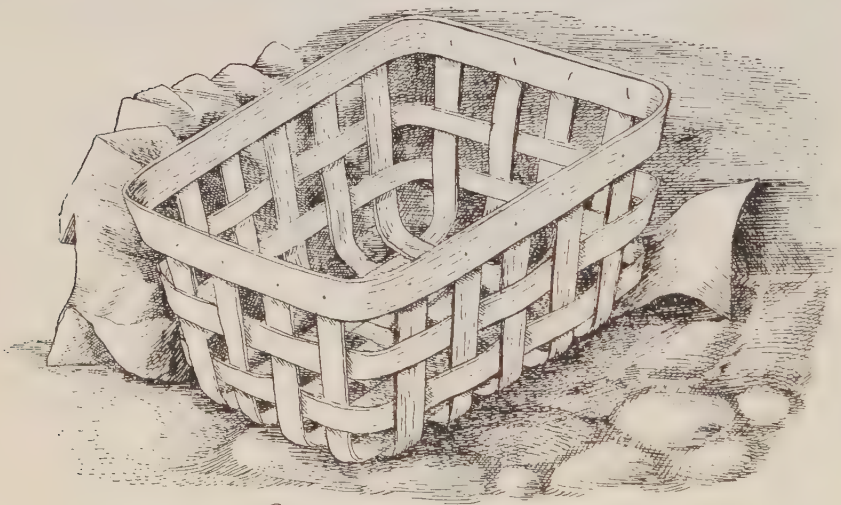
3

Your teeth is black,
Your liver white;
Your ways is like
A para SITE!
And now I come
To think of this,
A parasite
Is what you is.

FRANCIS PONGE

WORLD REVIEW has made this short selection of prose poems by Francis Ponge, the art critic and poet of 'things'. They are taken from his book, Le Parti Pris des Choses*—his 'Parti Pris' being the stand he has taken in defence, or rather in the interpretation of 'things'. His view is that science has alienated 'things' by classifying them, and art has betrayed them also by reading into them a pathetic fallacy. In his descriptive pieces he tries to put words at their disposal and (by showing the extreme fascination and hidden character of the orange, the loaf of bread, etc. etc.) to reduce Man to a humbler place in the Universe. His latest volume,* Cinq Sapates *(Five Surprise Presents) contains descriptions of the Earth, the Olives, the Pitcher, the Likeness of a Fish, and the Shutter.*

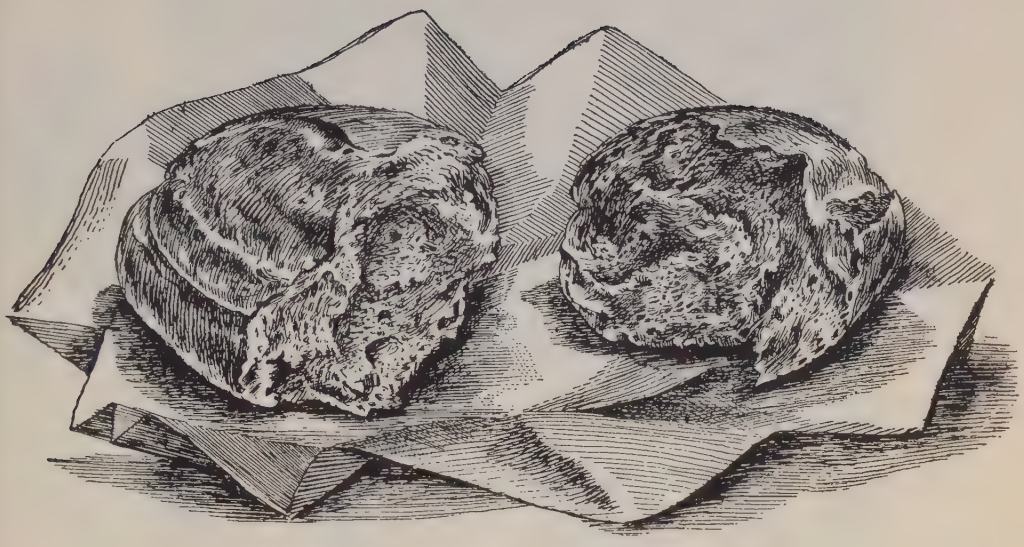
The drawings are by Ronald Ferns.



Le Cageot

Half way between *cage* and *cachot*, the French language has the word 'cageot', a very ordinary wicker-work basket intended for transport of those fruits to which the least hint of suffocation means certain disaster.

Constructed in such a way that, when it is finished with, it can be broken without difficulty, it is not used more than once; thus it has an even shorter life than the melting or fleeting goods which it holds. At the corner of every street leading to the market, it gleams with the unaffected shimmer of white matchwood; still quite new and somewhat aghast at its awkward position, abandoned for ever in the gutter, this object is, in short, extremely *sympathique*—but one must not, on the other hand, brood too long over its fate.



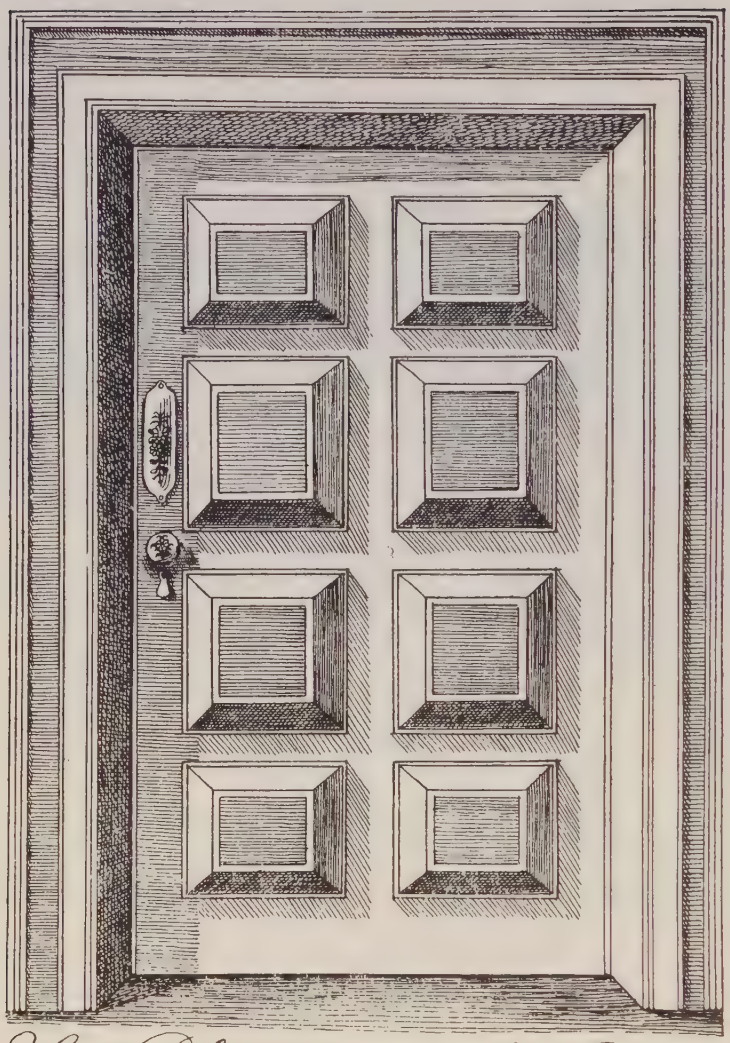
Le Pain

The surface of bread is truly wonderful, by reason of the almost panoramic impression it gives: as if you had at your fingertips the Alps, the Taurus or the Cordillera of the Andes.

A large amorphous mass half-way through an explosion must have been put (for our benefit) into the oven of the Universe, where, as it grew hard, it took the form of valleys, peaks, crevasses, faults and folds . . . and all those different levels so delicately marked, those thin slabs of rock where the light steadily glows—without the thought of the ignoble sponginess which lies below.

This cold and wretched sub-soil, which goes by the name of 'the crumb', has a texture similar to that of sponges; its leaves and flowers are like Siamese twins, joined together at every point; when the bread becomes stale, its flowers wither and crumple; they fall apart from one another and that great lump is then easily broken.

But let us take a piece: for bread, while it is being eaten, should be a matter of taste rather than of respectful consideration.



Les Plaisirs de la Porte

The great ones of the earth never touch a door.

It is a happiness they never know: to push one of these large familiar slabs of wood gently or violently in front of you, then to turn round and put it in its place—to hold a door in your arms.

. . . The happiness of giving one of these high barriers of a room a good blow in the stomach with its porcelain handle; the rapid struggle, as a result of which, after being held up for a moment, your eye opens and your whole body adjusts itself to being in a new room.

He still holds it in a friendly spirit before pushing it firmly back and shutting himself in—the click of the powerful but well-oiled spring makes him agreeably certain that he has done so.

Francis Ponge

L'Orange

In the orange (just as in the sponge) there is the constant struggle to recover composure after having undergone the ordeal of squeezing. But, whereas the sponge always succeeds in this, the orange never does; its cells have burst, its tissues are torn apart. Only the peel (thanks to its elasticity) is able gently, slowly, to recover its shape, while an amber liquid spills out accompanied by refreshing sensations, by a bland perfume—yes, but also frequently by the bitter consciousness of the premature loss of pips.

Must one decide which is the better of these two miserable ways of supporting oppression?—The sponge, after all, is nothing but muscle, and sucks in air, clean water or dirty water, whichever comes along: an ignoble manoeuvre. The orange has more refinement, but it is too passive—and that perfumed sacrifice . . . rewarding evil with so much too much good . . .

But when we have recalled this peculiar property of making the air fragrant and thereby indulging its torturer, we have not said all there is to say about the orange. We must emphasise the glorious colours of its liquid, which, (far more effectively than lemon juice), makes the larynx open as wide as does the pronunciation of the word *orange* itself for the pouring down of drink, and this without any apprehensive shudder of the nerves of the palate which it does not set on edge.

And there are no words to express the admiration aroused by the surrounding envelope of the delicate, fragile pink sphere in its thick wrapping of blotting material, whose skin, exceedingly thin but heavily pigmented and bitter to the taste, is just sufficiently uneven to attract the right amount of light on to the perfect form of the fruit.

But to conclude this too brief description—drawn, as far as possible, 'in the round'—we must say something about the pip. This seed, in the shape of a miniature lemon, is white outside like the wood of the lemon tree and inside pea green, or the green of young wheat. After the sensational explosion of the Japanese lantern of taste, scent, and colour which makes up the fruit itself, it is in the pip that we shall find a relative toughness and the sap (which has a taste of its own, by the way) of the wood, the branch and the leaf: a trifling affair, but beyond all possible doubt, the *raison d'être* of the fruit.

THE DEATH OF ME

BERNARD MALAMUD

THERE was once a tailor, Marcus, a buoyant man with a bushy head of greying hair, fine, fragile crescent brows and benevolent hands, who comparatively late in life had become a clothier. Because he had prospered, so to say, into ill health, he found it necessary to employ, in the rear room, an assistant tailor who made alterations on garments, but could not, when the work piled up, handle the pressing—especially of the tuxedos and dress-suits for rent—so that it was necessary to hire a presser, as a result of which, though the small store did well, it did not do too well.

It might have done better, but the presser, Jozip Bruzack, a heavy, beery, perspiring Pole, who worked in his undershirt and felt slippers, with his pants loose on his beefy hips, the legs crumpling around the ankles, conceived a violent dislike for Emilio Vizzo, the tailor (or it worked the other way, Marcus was not sure)—a thin, dry, pigeon-chested Italian, who bore, or returned, the Pole a steely malice, and because of their quarrels the business suffered.

Why they should fight as they did, fluttering and snarling like angry cocks, and using, into the bargain, terrible language, loud, coarse words that affronted the customers and sometimes made the embarrassed Marcus feel dizzy to the point of fainting, absolutely mystified the clothier, who knew their troubles and felt they were, as people, much alike. Bruzack, who lived in a half-ruined rooming house near the East River, constantly guzzled beer at work, a dozen or fifteen bottles of which he kept in a rusty metal pan packed full of ice. (When Marcus in the beginning objected, Jozip, who was always respectful to the clothier, locked away the pan but instead disappeared through the back door into the tavern down the block, where he had his glassful, wasting, in the process, so much precious time that it paid Marcus to advise him to go back to the pan.) Every day at lunch Jozip pulled out of the drawer a small sharp knife with which he cut chunks of the hard garlic salami he ate with puffy lumps of white bread, washing it down with beer and that with black coffee brewed on the one-burner gas stove for the tailor's iron. Such was always his noontime meal unless he sometimes cooked up a soupy mess of cabbage which stank up the store, to give himself the vegetable he thought he ought to have; but on the whole, neither the cabbage nor the food interested him, and he seemed weary and uneasy until the mailman brought him, about every third week, a letter from the other side. When the letters came (he more than once tore them in half with his bumbling fingers), he forgot his work, and sitting on a backless chair, fished out of the same drawer where he kept his salami a pair of cracked eyeglasses which he attached to his ears by means of looped cords he had tied on in place of the broken side-pieces; then devoted himself to the tissue sheets he held in his fist, a crabbed Polish writing in faded brown ink, whose every word he uttered aloud so that Marcus, who understood the language but preferred not to hear, heard. Before the presser went two sentences into the letter, his face seemed to break and he was already crying, the oily tears smearing his cheeks and chin so that it looked as though he had been sprayed with something. At the end he fell into a roar of sobbing, a terrible thing to behold, which incapacitated him for hours so that, where work was concerned, the morning was wasted. Marcus had often thought of telling him to read his letters at home but the news in them wrung his heart and he could not bring himself to scold Jozip who was, by the way, a master presser. Once he began on a pile of suits, PROSPERITY, the pressing machine, hissed without let up,

and every garment came out flat and neat, without puff or bump, and the arms and legs and pleats were as sharp as knife blades. As for the news in the letters, it was always the same: concerning the harrowing experiences of his tubercular wife and their unfortunate fifteen-year-old son, whom Jozip (except in pictures) had never seen, a boy who lived, literally, in the mud with the pigs, and who was also afflicted with tuberculosis, so that even if his father saved up the money for his passage to America and he could obtain a visa, he would never get past the immigration doctors. Marcus more than once gave the presser a suit of clothes to send to his boy and occasionally some cash, but he wondered if these things ever got to him because he had the uncomfortable thought that Jozip, within the past fifteen years—certainly before the war—might easily have brought the boy over had he wanted, his wife, too, before she had contracted tuberculosis, but that for some reason he neglected to and preferred to weep over them where they were.

Emilio, the tailor, was also a lone wolf. Every day he had a forty-cent lunch in a diner about five blocks away but was always back early to read his *Corriere*. His peculiarity was that he was always whispering to himself. No one could understand what he said, but it was sibilant and urgent, and wherever he was, you could hear this hissing voice urging something or perhaps moaning softly, though he never wept. He whispered when he sewed on a button or shortened a sleeve or when he used the iron. Whispering when he came in and hung up his coat in the morning, he was still whispering when he put on his black hat, wriggled his sparse shoulders and left, in his loneliness, the store at night. Only once did he give a hint what the whispering was about: when the clothier, noticing his pallor one morning, brought him a cup of coffee, in gratitude the tailor confided that his wife, who had returned last week, had left him again this, and he held up the outstretched fingers of one bony hand to show she had five times run out on him. Marcus offered the man his strongest sympathy, and thereafter, when he heard the tailor whispering in the rear of the store, could always picture the wife coming back to him from wherever she had been, saying she was this time—she swore—going to stay for good, but at night, when they were both in bed and he was whispering about her in the dark, she would think to herself she could never stand this thing and in the morning was gone. And so the man's ceaseless whisper bothered Marcus (he had to leave the store to hear silence) yet he kept Emilio on because he was an unusual tailor, a demon with a needle, who could sew up a perfect cuff in less time than it would take an ordinary workman to make measurements, the kind of tailor who, when you were looking for one, was very rare.

For more than a year, despite the fact that they both created strange sounds, neither the presser nor the tailor seemed to have anything to do with one another; then one day, as if an invisible wall between them had blown up, there they were at each other's throats. Marcus, it appeared, walked in at the very birth of their venom; when leaving a customer in the store one afternoon, he went back to get a piece of marking chalk and came upon a sight that congealed him. There they were, in the afternoon sunlight that flooded the shop—momentarily blinding the clothier so that he had time to think he could not possibly be seeing what he saw—the transformed two at opposite corners staring stilly at each other—a live, almost hairy staring of fantastic hatred. The sneering Bruzack in one trembling hand squeezed a heavy wooden pressing block, while the livid tailor, standing with his back arched like a cat's against the wall, held aloft, like a spear in his rigid white fingers, a pair of cutter's shears.

'What is it?' shouted the alarmed Marcus when he had recovered his voice, but neither of them would break the stone silence and remained as when he had discovered them, glaring across the shop with gleaming eyes, the tailor's lips moving noiselessly, and the presser, breathing like a dog in heat, an eeriness about them that Marcus had never suspected.

'My God,' he cried, his body drenched in frigid creeping wetness, 'tell me what happened', but neither uttered a sound, so he shrieked through the constriction in his throat, which made the words grate

hideously, 'Go to work—' hardly believing they would obey; and when they did, Bruzack turning like a lump of twisted clay to PROSPERITY, and the tailor, stiffly, to the hot iron, Marcus was softened by their compliance and, speaking as if to children, said, with tears in his eyes, 'Boys, don't fight.'

Afterwards the clothier stood alone in the cool of the store, staring through the glass front door at nothing at all, as he recaptured, in thinking of them (at his very back) a world of horrid green, of grass and green sunlight, but unpeopled except by moaning and pungent blood odour. They—they had made him dizzy, and he lowered himself into the leather chair, praying no customer would enter until he had sufficiently rested from his choked weakness. So sighing, he shut his eyes and felt his skull liven with new terror to see them both, their grating presences within him, engaged in round pursuit, hot after the other, lumbering but in flight, who had stolen his box of broken buttons and a spool of thread, and skirting the lit and smoking sands, scrambled high up the craggy cliff, where, locked both in many-handed struggle, rocking upon the ledge—the edge—slipped on slime and fell, expressionless, though reaching forth four hands clutching nothing in stiffened fingers; as he, watcher from the pinnacle above, shrieked without sound at their evanescence.

On such thoughts, he moaned and sat in dizziness till they had left him.

When he was again himself, remembrance made it as in a dream. He more or less denied any untoward incident had happened; yet, knowing it had, he called it a triviality—how often had he seen, in the factory where he had worked upon first coming to America, such occurrences?—a triviality all concerned would soon forget.

However, on the very next day and thereafter daily without skipping a single day, the two in the back broke out of their unheard hatred into thunderous quarrelling that did damage to the business, for they called each other, in ugly voices, dirty names that embarrassed the clothier, too ashamed to remove the tape full of inches he wore like a garment around the neck. Customer and clothier glanced nervously at one another and Marcus, though he felt naked to do so, quickly ran through the tape measurements, and the customer, who as a rule liked to linger in talk of his new clothes, left hurriedly after paying, to escape the drone of disgusting names hurled about in the back yet clearly heard in front, so that no one had privacy.

Not only would they curse and damn, but mutter and mumble in their respective tongues other terrible things. The clothier understood Jozip was shouting: 'Cut up your rotten flesh in pieces, your genitals too in small pieces and rub them in rock salt'; so he guessed Emilio was shouting much the same things, and he was saddened and maddened at once.

He went many times to the rear, pleading with them to be gentlemen and they listened to every word he had to say with interest and tolerance, because the clothier, besides being a kind man—this showed in his eyes—was also eloquent, which they both enjoyed. Yet, whatever his words, they did no good, for the minute he finished and was no more than half gone, they began again. Embittered, he withdrew into the store and sat in the chair nursing his misery under the old yellow-faced clock clicking away the yellow minutes till they had to stop (it was amazing that they got anything done) and go home.

His urge was to bounce them out on their behinds, but he could not conceive where to find two like them who were such skilled workers without having to pay a fortune in gold. Therefore, with reform uppermost in his mind, he caught Emilio one noon as he was leaving for lunch, whispered him into a corner and asked, 'Listen, Emilio, you're the smart one, tell me, why do you fight? Why do you hate him and why does he hate you and why do you both use such bad words?' Though he enjoyed the whispering and was soft as dough in the clothier's hands, the tailor, who liked these little attentions, lowered his eyes and blushed darkly but would not reply.

So Marcus sat all afternoon under the clock, with his fingers plugged in his ears, but he caught the presser on his way out that evening and said to him, 'Please,

Jozip, tell me, what did he do to you? Jozip, you have a sick wife and boy.' But Jozip, who also had affection for the clothier—he was, despite Polish, in no sense of the word an anti-Semite—merely caught him in his hammy arms, and though he had to clutch at his trousers which were falling and impeding his movements, hugged Marcus into a ponderous polka, then with a cackle pushed him aside and danced alone, in the beer jag, away.

When they started the same dirty hullabaloo the next morning and drove a customer out immediately, the clothier stormed into the shop and they turned from swearing—both looked fatigued, with greenish-grey faces—and gave heed to the clothier's begging, shaming, weeping, but especially listened when Marcus, who found screeching unsuited to him, dropped it and spoke his advice and little preachments in a low, becoming tone. He was a tall man, and, because of his illness, quite thin; what flesh remained had wasted further in these troublesome months, and his hair was about white now, so that, as he stood between them, expostulating, exhorting, he was in appearance like an ancient hermit, if not a saint, and the workers showed keen interest as he spoke.

It was a homily about his long-dead dear father, when they were all children living in a rutted village of thatched huts, a gaunt family of ten—nine boys and an undersized girl. Oh, they were marvellously poor: many a day he had chewed, as his only meal, bark and even grass, bloating his little tummy, and often the boys bit one another (including the sister) upon the hands and necks in anger at their hunger.

'So my father, who had a milk-white beard down to there'—he stooped, reaching his hand to his knee and at once tears sprung into Jozip's eyes—'my father said, "Children, we are poor people and strangers wherever we go—".'

But the clothier was not able to finish because the presser, plumped on the backless chair, swaying a little, had begun to whimper and then bawl; and the tailor, who was making odd clicking noises in his throat, had to turn away.

'Promise,' begged Marcus, 'that you will not fight.'

Jozip wept his promise and Emilio gravely nodded.

This, the clothier exulted, was fellowship and with a blessing on them departed, but even before he was altogether gone, the air behind him was greased with their fury.

Twenty-four hours later he fenced them in. A carpenter came and built a wooden partition, halving the presser's and tailor's space, and for once there was astonished quiet between them. As a matter of fact, they were absolutely silent for a full week. The clothier actually jumped in joy and clicked his heels together. He noticed, of course, that the presser occasionally stopped pressing and came befuddled to the new door to see if the tailor was still there, and though the tailor did the same thing, it went no further than that. Thereafter Emilio Vizzo no longer whispered to himself and Jozip Bruzack touched no beer, and when the emaciated letters arrived from the other side, he took them home to read by the dirty window of his dark room, and if he couldn't see the writing, though there was electricity, he preferred to read by candlelight.

One Monday morning he opened the table drawer to get at his garlic salami and found it had been roughly broken in two. With his pointed knife raised, he rushed at the tailor who was at that very moment coming at him with the burning iron because someone had banged up his black hat. He caught the presser along the calf of the arm and opened a smelly purple gash just as the presser stuck him in the groin and for a while the knife remained there.

Roaring, wailing, the clothier ran in and, despite their wounds, sent them packing. When he had left, they locked themselves together and choked each other's necks.

Marcus rushed in again, shouting 'No no!', flailing his withered arms at them (all he could hear was the thundering clock), but his heart, like a fragile pitcher, toppled from the shelf and bump bumped down the stairs, cracking at the bottom, the hard shards flying everywhere. Although his eyes were glazed as he crumpled, the assassins could plainly see inscribed in them *you see.*

PEOPLE IN GLASS HOUSES

JOHN SOMMERFIELD

On summer days three overcoats she wore at once, the longest underneath, so that the shabby hems hung one above the other, in tiers. 'Poor lady,' strangers said. 'How she must feel the cold.' Yet she had been seen sitting in a deck-chair on her knee-high thistled lawn, reading Kant or Hegel, while a light fall of snow was in progress.

She was not an easy woman to understand. 'Eccentric' the neighbours called her once—but that was in years gone by, before the time of their ill-will had set in. Her husband used to speak of her, sighing a little, as 'a woman of character'. That, too, was long ago. He was dead, carried off at the age of thirty-nine, and since then her unconventionalities had flourished and luxuriated unchecked, like the thistles on the jungly lawn. And her neighbours, no longer tolerantly amused, were hostile and eager to get rid of her. Local faces became sharp and disapproving as they passed the grimy windows of her house and strove obliquely to penetrate the mysteries that lay within, behind the tattered and time-stained lace curtains.

Naked she used to walk about her rooms, naked she stood at her vast kitchen table, ironing underclothes with wild abandon. Only a little triangular space cleared at one corner of the table's cluttered surface would she use, unwilling to disturb the rich confusion of a hundred empty jam-jars mingled with generations of worn-out toothbrushes, the lids of long-discarded saucepans, cotton reels, silver paper, cuttings from the *Times Literary Supplement*, and cocoa-tins full of glass beads.

She kept her dustbin in the kitchen. The dustman knocked. 'Come in,' she cried. He, a wise and kindly man, made nothing of it, spoke of the unseasonable weather, and gathered the bin to himself. Outside he told his mate 'That old lady there in seventeen, she's off her head, poor thing.'

'Dustman dear,' she called from within, 'would you like a cup of tea?'

The sonorously empty bin he placed beside the step, and gently closed the unlatched door. 'You mark my words,' he said. 'One of these days they'll come and fetch her in a van, poor lady . . . standing there in her nudity like she was waiting for the day of judgment.'

Each in that street had his or her own maggot hidden in the brain, and this private mental sickness was affronted and stirred up to recognise, openly displayed, the signs of that which in themselves was so painfully kept down in darkness. And so the neighbours scandalised and wished her ill. But they knew no way of hurting her other than with their tongues.

Errand boys she strove to lure into her kitchen; and passing strangers, business men especially, those with bowler hats and the wearers of stiff collars she accosted from within her front garden. At the gate she stood on summer mornings as down the avenue came circumspectly treading the well-shod feet of citizens bound for office desks. Then, her face screwed up with conscious pathos, she began to fumble with the latch of the little wooden gate, pantomiming surprise, annoyance and helplessness. Trapped she was, in her own garden, by the malevolence of inanimate objects. 'Help me, sir,' she called, 'can you, to release this latch?' Eyes averted, they passed by, sometimes mumbling 'Sorry, can't stop, train to catch . . . ' Fear of their own embarrassment flushed their cheeks and pursued them to the bus stop.

Miss Balsam, the curtain-twitcher next door but one, glared through the chink of plush behind her window glass, a wild and secret hatred in her heart. 'A complaint,' she muttered to herself 'a complaint should be made for she's not fit to live

beside us.' But no known legal offence had been committed; not a single bye-law had the lady at seventeen been known to break, and her rates and taxes she paid at their appointed times.

On various dark nights three aldermen had been approached by her, with outstretched palm, her eyes downcast, as modest-voiced she asked for one and six. 'Just one and six, sir,' she wanted 'to buy myself a pair of drawers, I can't go about like this, now can I . . .?' Panic-stricken, the city elders fled the mild, imploring voice and hopeful hand, and fear of ridicule stopped them from publishing the story of their outraged modesty.

As her quarry grew more shy, she sought them on her bicycle. Down the avenue she sped, in pursuit of some distantly-sighted bowler hat, and, having overtaken the intended wearer, she would alight, placing herself strategically in his path, her large, purplish, healthy face glowing with an expression of innocent pleasure. 'Pardon my presumption, sir,' she'd say 'but are you Mr. Mason from the gas company?'

The bicycle was green, old and enormous, and bore complicated acetylene lamps connected by a clinical-looking tangle of red rubber tubes. A relic of romantic girlhood, she rode it everywhere. Shopping one day, she wheeled it by her side through the open plate-glass doors of the department store, past lace and ribbons counter, skirting knitting wools, and advancing towards soft furnishings.

The customers were abashed, assistants gaped, giggled, and looked the other way. Then came the manager himself, his pale brow convulsed. 'Oh Mr. Purcell, sir,' they gasped, 'what shall we do?' But he passed them by contemptuously. 'Madam,' he said, fixing her with a frigid glance, his voice like icicles grating on zinc sheets, 'I must ask you to remove that machine.' And she, suddenly waking to a sense of guilt, was graciously repentant. 'A piece of thoughtlessness,' she said. 'Pray convey my apologies to the manager.'

Drawing her overcoats around her, she nimbly ensaddled herself and, incessantly ringing her bell, pedalled down the aisle of the baby-linen department and out into the roaring street.

She was kind, gave money to beggars and cheques to deserving causes. In politics she inclined to Liberalism, and was a student of philosophy, being particularly addicted to Hegel, whose works she read in the original German. Local courses of lectures on 'The Dance through the Ages', 'Elizabethan Poetry' and 'British Nesting Birds' she attended regularly, and also meetings of the Literary Society, when visiting celebrities were lecturing. A ready listener, she sat right at the front—for which purpose she always arrived very early and so could not be excluded—nodding her head in agreement when points were made, often clucking and clicking her tongue in pleased surprise, or uttering little cries of 'Really', 'Fancy that' and 'How interesting'. Question time was her particular pleasure. Then she rose from her seat and came into her own, twisting and tangling their wits with well-informed and deadly irrelevances.

They said she was crazy, stared after her in the street, whispered, pointed, averted eyes. She's balmy, the poor old trot, even the kindest said: she should be shut up. But she owned her house (freehold) and shares in an American copper mine from which she received four hundred and ten pounds a year, tax free; she was a responsible citizen, voted in elections, could serve on juries, and always paid her debts. Of the glances, the accusations and reproaches that were aimed against her, she seemed totally oblivious.

Miss Balsam, from next door but one, went to the police station, and told a story with skilfully envenomed tongue. A policeman called at number seventeen. 'There's been a complaint madam,' he said. 'The neighbours——'

'Poor Miss B.' she interrupted. 'She's known no love in all her life, and it's turned her natural instincts into nastiness. I think she's the one that writes the dirty words on my garden gate as well——in red chalk. Be that as it may, I've nothing but pity for her, and will not add my voice to any complaint . . .'

They conversed for awhile: she was amiable and lucid, but did not offer him a cup of tea as it was not her ironing day. He went back to the station not knowing what to think.

Miss Balsam's rancour remained, curdling and unsatisfied. She brooded schemes through sleepless nights, until she thought of the money in the copper mine and the dead husband's impatient heirs. It was detective work to discover their names and where they lived but she persevered amazingly and in the end succeeded. Then she composed a letter, kind-sounding, solicitous, and loaded with calculated indiscretions. After she had posted it, she slept better, and her sick headaches went away.

First came the youngest heir, with a foolish, foxy face, eager as a terrier. Alighting from his little red car, he surveyed the house with a proprietorial gaze, and looked reprovingly upon the blistered, peeling paint when he knocked at the front door. In the dusty twilight of the front sitting-room, that smelt of mice and mildew, he spoke pathetically of her lonely life and how her husband's relatives longed to care for her. Beneath her steadfast gaze, his close-set eyes wavered; he became flustered, and she sent him away quite easily. A fortnight later the elder brother came, an important-looking man, in a hired car, with two doctors. Miss Balsam watched them arrive, and impaled the closed front door with a strained and piercing gaze. She stayed by her curtain-chink for three-quarters of an hour, and then the door opened and they came out again, the elder heir wearing a baffled look behind his fixed, false grin, while the lady and the two doctors chatted amiably. At the garden gate they all shook hands; the visitors got into their car and drove away, never to return.

Miss Balsam let go the curtains, and the chink through which she viewed the world closed up. Her gazing eye was tired, and its fatigue brought back the sick headache. She sank back into a chair and moaned; the headache hammered in her skull like a living thing. When she looked up again, her face twitched furiously, and the tired eye began to blink madly, of its own accord.

In the kitchen the blinking eye was still, but whenever she went into the front room, the muscles of her face began to dance again. Eventually she could stand it no longer, sold up the house and went to live with her widowed sister at Barrow-in-Furness, with whom she spent her declining years in mutual and unmitigated misery.

The lady at number seventeen remains as she was, in the best of health and the full enjoyment of her faculties.

IO SONO UN UCELLO DI BOSCO

ROCCO SCOTELLARO

All day long the evensong of evening bore me to you
I am the most passive prisoner knitting with a hook in the shadow
Out of the bush your brightness drew me before night fell on me I followed—
But I am a woodbird singing to the empty air

(*Translated from the Italian*)

LETTER FROM PARIS

PIERRE SEGHERS

M. Paul Claudel has already made a success of three careers: as a Catholic, as a poet and as a company director—I'm sorry: four careers; I forgot that he has also been an ambassador. Now he is taking a shot at a fifth, and is proving himself to be one of the most considerable dramatists of our time. (I use the word 'considerable' in the sense M. Francis Ponge has given it, or forced on it: derived from the Latin *considerare*, made up of *cum* and *sidus*, *sideris* [cf. Sideral], with the result that in Latin *considerare* infers some contemplation of the stars. So, if you want to ingratiate yourself with M. Francis Ponge, offer him your *consideration distinguée*.) In short, Paris, a bit battered by eighty first nights (there are two seasons a year) has conscientiously appreciated *Jeanne au Bucher*, which was written during the Occupation about the same time as the *Ode au Maréchal* (Pétain, three cheers for the Army, and Yes, sir, Yes, sir, three bags full . . .).

Having seen that, this same public, which will not go to see *Les Allemands*, a new and interesting play by Mr. Kruczkowski, went to clap the one man who particularly hates the *Ode au Général* (de Gaulle, this time; there are so many senior officers in the French Army that if he goes on like this, M. Claudel will have to study the Army List). This public, hand-picked from the *Who's Who in Literature*, played its old game of rolling the bones with M. André Gide, who had just trimmed up the back and sides of his old henchman Lafcadio. The Comédie Française, gleaming like the polished leather binding of a special edition, the upper classes avid for literature and memories: a complete past epoch seemed to fade away, overshadowed by the figure of that 'grand old man' who does, however, remind one a little too much of a Fantômas of the literature of 1912.

At the same time we have heard M. de Montherlant, the soldier of fortune and *Jeunes Filles*, whose coat of arms should be caterpillars on a field gules.[1] (In 1941, M. de Montherlant wrote that the conquered were like caterpillars on which the conquerors, the Teutonic Knights, relieved themselves.) He came out first with a play which smacked of retrospection: *Celles que l'on prend dans ses bras*. I might say that the author does not seem to know very much about his subject. Ardour and the irresistible urge towards holiness and greatness are more natural to M. de Montherlant than a simple inclination. Then he fell back along carefully-planned lines of retreat to a previously-prepared position. He offered the public (a different section of it, I imagine) a second play, *Malatesta*, a cannonade of noble sentiments and fine language, in which the characters spend most of their time discoursing on—and often giving away—the superiority and loftiness of their creator. Once again M. de Montherlant has shown, at long range, that he is the champion, the herald of unequivocal formulas and the heroic style.

Fortunately, however, there are more people in Paris than literary men bitten by the desire to see their names in lights. (I notice that I have said nothing about M. François Mauriac. This season he, too, appears as a dramatist—but only just.)

Two real writers, first-class dramatists both of them, have offered theatre-lovers and the public two plays in which the characters speak without using the sacred formula of the established publishing houses of Gallimard and Grasset—*Poof* by Armand Salacrou, a lively, human fantasy which goes even further than Jules Romains' *Knock*, and *La Répétition ou*

[1] M. Seghers has here made a pun, which I despair of translating, on *gueules*, the heraldic 'gules', and *gueule*, the slang for a face, and also, probably, *gueuler* to rant.—Ed.

l'Amour Puni by Anouilh, an intellectual recreation which is a triumph of sensibility and technical skill.

To return to Fantômas (not to M. Gide —during the rehearsals of *Les Caves du Vatican* he insisted on being absolutely alone in the stalls of the Théâtre Français, while the actors shivered on the stage), he—Fantômas—can be seen every evening at the *Rose Rouge*, in full dress, tails and black velvet mask, in an astonishing setting by Yves Robert. After poems by Jacques Prevert set to music by Kosma (but no longer sung—alas!—by the dark and beautiful Gréco who has become a star in Buenos Aires), the stanzas of Robert Desnos, set to music by Kurt Weill, come to life again in a quick series of scenes and strange silhouettes; a popular lament—a thriller which is built round the elusive Satan-des-Villes. The success of this piece makes me think of Robert Desnos and of how glad he would have been—if he had not died of typhus in a German camp—at the return of 'his' Fantômas (him again) to fascinate and terrorise his dear peaceful village of St. Germain des Prés.

St. Germain, however, is very quiet. When winter came, and the American students went back to their baseball, the Fridays (now the Thursdays) of Gaston Gallimard are the only signs of life in the *quartier*. On these days, the heart of St. Germain shifts to the *Rue Sebastian Bottin* and there beats in unison with the heart of literature. There is the general air of a fashionable wedding. Here, the 'At Home' of the Prix Goncourt (for the publishers carried off the award just as much as the author, M. Paul Colin—but that is an old story), here, the 'At Home' of the Ministry of French Literature (no connection with the weekly *Lettres Françaises*—a thing in bad taste—ban it!), here, at the grand receptions where Fath's mannequins receive William Faulkner or Laurence Olivier, here are to be found all the graces of fashion and literature. The literary men and the academicians lend respectability to the scene, while M. Jean Cau, one of the firm's youngest novelists, stands by smiling at the sight of his characters in the flesh. (He is a courageous young man. If his victims had ever read his first novel, *Le Coup de Barre*, they would probably turn on him and tear him to pieces.) If they did, that would be N.R.F.'s second crime. I am not counting its crimes against literature; I am talking of physical attacks, and two assaults, even for a big firm, are quite a lot. The first affray would have delighted Felix Fénéon, who used to be a great connoisseur of bomb-throwing. His biographer and friend, M. Jean Paulhan, prefers bowls. Literally, M. Jean Paulhan very nearly brained M. Jean Jouhardeau when he flung a 'wood' at him at a range of twelve yards. As the author of *Fleurs de Tarbes* is a good shot, he scored a bull. And that is what they call playing the game!

In short, everybody who is anybody goes to these parties, a brilliant and select company, closely observed by the sharp bird-like eye of Jean Tardieu, the poet whose latest collected works, *Monsieur-Monsieur*, are to be published shortly. In truth, it is an iridescent and frivolous gathering (isn't literature a game, after all?), refreshed by excellent champagne and equally welcome praise, who thoroughly enjoy themselves (and why not?)—a form of social life which already seems to belong to the good old days—a long way from Korea, Indo-China and the tiresome modern tendency to pay too much attention to things which are of no real importance: surely literature ought to be left in peace, particularly when literature gives such excellent parties.

In the Rue de l'Elysée they do not hold with all this. There the *Comité National des Ecrivains* (as opposed to the President of the Republic who lives across the road) entertains Pablo Neruda, Russian scholars and writers and José Bergamin. They are not so well dressed—except for Madame Elsa Triolet, the Secretary-General—and they are a very mixed bag, but in spite of that, there is among them a cohesion and a team spirit inspired by aims which go beyond the delights of literature. Here, a group of young poets gather round Paul Eluard and Aragon. Two of them at least are real poets—Dobzynski, a young working man who wrote *La Question Décisive*, and René Depestre, from Haiti, also aged twenty, whose collected poems, *Végétations*

de Clarté, have just been published. These two represent not just another passing phase or another last refinement of French poetry but something new—young political poetry.

Finally, if you would prefer something half-way between receptions which are literary and fashionable and receptions political and literary, you ought to have gone to Ricard's reception in the Avenue de l'Opéra. It was for literature alone (but the poets to be honoured were dead) and was a truly Parisian and representative gathering, a toast offered to the memory of Leon-Paul Fargue, O. V. de L. Milosz and Robert Desnos. A few days later, at the Athenée Theatre, Paris paid its respects to Fargue, the poet of its nights and streets, the dearly-loved poet of *Pour la Musique*, who will not be forgotten and cannot be replaced.

Meanwhile poets appear and disappear in accordance with some mysterious law. The arc-lamps would seem to have singed the wings of Jean Cocteau's Muse, but he certainly keeps a spare pair for her. Michaux has soared upwards and reached the level of the Zénés[1], while Jules Supervielle remains tuned in to man's fragility. Blaise Cendrars keeps his bright blue eye fixed on Paris, watching all its adventures past and to come with the wisdom and humanity of a man who is close to the heart of the world. He is, by the way, writing a novel. In the little world of famous poets, however, the most important event is the publication of a special number of the *Cahiers de la Pléiade—Homage à Saint John Perse*. Prepared by M. Jean Paulhan (who was awarded the Grand Prix Municipal de Littérature), it is a worthy tribute to one of the greatest living French poets, a prince of language, a magician with strict rules, the high priest of incantations (I can't help thinking of the fate of Thomas à Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral*) and lastly, thanks to M. Robert Mallet, who introduced M. Paul Léautaud in one of the best literary broadcasts of the French radio, the N.R.F. are preparing an edition of the complete works of Valery Larbaud, the famous Barnabooth, the poet of international trains and rawhide suitcases.

And now, what about the young men? Why does Pierre Emmanuel, who wrote *Babel* and *Sodome*, the heir of Agrippa d'Aubigne and Pierre Jean Louve, seem to be forgotten, while Réné Char tops the bill? Why did Loys Masson, who seemed to be marking time after his *Thomas Wilson*, get nowhere with his recent work *Icare*? Why does Guillevic, the poet of the Word, remain a favourite with his *Envie de Vivre*, while André Frenaud—whose *Enorme Figure de la Déesse Raison* has just been published in a special edition—is hardly known at all?

At long last, after his death, people are beginning to realise that Yvan Goll was a true poet and they are reading his *Jean Sans Terre*, a legend of the Wandering Jew, and his *Géorgiques Parisiennes*. In Sologne, they seem to have abandoned Patrice de la Tour du Pin to his house in Bignon-Mirabeau where he is working steadily and quietly at his *Somme de Poésie*. He tells me it will be a *Somme de Prière*.

Paris is a Moloch who demands constant attendance, a circus in which the performers must never leave the ring. Woe to the absent or to the modest! They will need to be very patient. For fifteen years the talented Paul Gilson has been working quietly, and so it is only today that the public is beginning to realise that his *Rendez-vous des Solitaires* and *Ballades pour Fantômes* are the works of a real poet. Nowadays the only luxury left in travel is to be able to do it slowly. Does the same apply to authors?

[1] Zénés—in Quenean slang—are clouds in the literary heavens, old-young men who float between the nimbus and the cumulus

THE CONSUL

FELIX APRAHAMIAN

OPERATIC history was made in Philadelphia a year ago when, on 1 March 1950, Gian-Carlo Menotti's musical drama, *The Consul*, had its world première. A long run started in New York a fortnight later. The work has already reached La Scala and will be given a whole string of other continental performances before the end of this year.

For once London has not lagged behind. Private enterprise and not an officially-subsidised body has brought us this remarkable piece. Sir Laurence Olivier saw *The Consul* in New York and decided to present it in England. The London première took place at the Cambridge Theatre on 7 February 1951. Few modern works in the genre have compelled and deserved as much attention. In many eulogistic and well-reasoned accounts of the work, *amende honorable* has been made for London's treatment of *The Telephone* and *The Medium*, Menotti's two previous operas which, offered as a double bill three years ago, passed almost unnoticed.

But *The Consul* is a more serious affair than any of its precursors. The libretto—again by the composer himself—is a highly realistic account of a family 'somewhere in Europe'. John Sorel is obliged, for political reasons, to escape to a neighbouring country. His wife, Magda, is unsuccessful in obtaining a visa which will enable her to join him. Their child dies, then Sorel's mother. In desperation he returns—only to be captured. Meanwhile Magda, with the vain object of preventing this, gasses herself. This, in brief, is the uninviting, melodramatic plot of *The Consul*, with its six scenes divided equally between the Sorel home and the foreign consulate. And yet, right from the realism of the bullet-wound with which Sorel bursts into his room at the start, to that of his wife's suicide at the end, Menotti has created a work of art more haunting than harrowing, poetic rather than prosaic. What makes *The Consul* not only bearable, but irresistible?

Setting aside a well-nigh perfect production — Menotti's own — detailed examination of the score reveals an unerring sense of contrast. Throughout the work, tension, musical as well as dramatic, is followed by relaxation. The recipe, obvious enough, is not always easy to apply. Menotti, in control both of the words and music, has discovered how to effect this

balance between stress and repose, drama and light relief, while unfolding what is essentially a tragic tale.

Each scene affords examples. The infinitely touching duo in the first consulate scene (Act I, Sc. II) where the little Italian woman sings her story in her native tongue—to the apt musical accents of her compatriot, Puccini—while the tall and elderly Mr. Kofner translates into English at a few bars distance, is followed, after the consulate secretary's moment of coquetry, by the very different dialogue between the secretary and Magda. Contrast of a marked character is again found within this dialogue: the secretary answers Magda's increasingly passionate pleas with her inane repetition of, 'But what is there to explain?' or *allegretto* whole-tone refrain, 'Your name is a number. Your story's a case. Your need a request. Your hopes will be filed. Come back next week.' This last is, incidentally, a fair example of Menotti's ability as a librettist.

Again, the tender lullaby sung by Sorel's mother to her baby grandchild (Act II, Sc. I) is followed immediately by the distraught music of Magda's nightmare in which her husband appears to her, wounded and accompanied by Death, in the image of the consulate secretary. The emotional temperature of this scene is high, so that in the first part of the succeeding scene—the second at the consulate (Act II, Sc. II)—the tension is relieved by another applicant for a visa, Nika Magadoff, 'illusionist, telepathist and prestidigitator, hypnotist, ventriloquist, electro-levitator, in short, the great magician'. In the slickest music-hall style the Great Magadoff performs conjuring tricks and sings appropriately flippant music. His gifts conveniently engender Menotti's second interlude of the subconscious—a lilting waltz in which the hypnotised applicants dance with each other. Nothing could be more suggestive of their carefree state than the extreme simplicity of the music at this point. Its banality is psychologically right.

Menotti follows this by Magda's ever more urgent pleading, culminating in her long scena which is the crux of the work. It reaches its climax, after her moving soliloquy: 'My name—is woman. Age: Still young. Colour of hair: Grey. Colour of eyes: The colour of tears. Occupation: Waiting'—in two pages of E and D flat major calculated to wring tears even from daughters of the American Revolution. Here Patricia Neway's superb performance as Magda Sorel quite rightly stops the show. But Menotti reserves his second act curtain for a far more dramatic *dénouement*.

Act Three is rich in musical and dramatic contrasts. Scene One is again the consulate, where Magda seems to be waiting out of habit. The music describing her desolation and her recitative dialogue with Assan, who brings her news of her husband, is varied with the 'crisp and efficient' refrain of the secretary in duet with Vera Boronel, a fortunate applicant for a visa. With it the two women enjoy an orgy of stamping and signing documents at one end of the stage while Magda determines her fate at the other.

With the exception of its last ten bars, which are dramatically, if not musically, indefensible, the final scene depicting Magda's death is psychologically a *tour de force*. It also contains the most striking musical contrasts. Between Magda's turning on the gas—to musical sounds as eerie as anything in *Wozzeck*—and her final release in death, Menotti provides the third and last of his interludes of the subconscious: a phantasmagoria of dying. It takes the form, first, of a quiet, inexorable march, followed by a *valse macabre*, the suave sounds of which are interrupted by the continually increasing agitation of the dazed woman who is dreaming her last dream on earth. The whole of this final interlude with its hallucinatory reminiscences of previous happenings is one of the most moving things to be seen on the operatic stage. To point out the commonplace tonic and dominant harmonies in the waltz is not to account for Menotti's genius in their use. The 'corny' simplicity of the side-slip from G into E flat major each time Vera Boronel and the secretary come gliding in with their echo from the previous scene: 'It is the end, it is all over' does not lessen its emotional effect in that context. This placid, tonic-dominant pulsing sets into relief Magda's sorrow-laden 'why do their words weigh like stones on my heart?' where her soprano line is burdened

with the octave doubling of the bass instruments. Here again, and to the very end, tension and relaxation alternate, propelling the listener along till, at the last, all but the super-sophisticated must admit the impact of the work.

The Consul is a fine example of musical craftsmanship. Menotti's pre-occupation, as he admits, is setting words to music. Questions of prosody, the inflections of recitative and the like, interest him more than set pieces such as arias and ensembles. Italian-born, Menotti confesses that, despite his long residence in the United States, English words still have an exotic flavour for him. And yet he shows his gift for operatic ensemble in the trio which ends the very first scene, and the quintet which ends the second. He also recalls themes with admirable effect. The generating phrase of the trio ('Now, O lips, say goodbye') is made to accompany Magda's decision in the final consulate scene and also Sorel's recognition of his wife's pocket-book a few minutes later. On both occasions it gives apposite and succinct expression to an emotion which, at that point, only music could express.

The ten final bars, referred to earlier, constitute the work's one obvious flaw. This is the identical music which accompanies the peroration of Magda's scena at the words 'Oh! the day will come' (Act II, Sc. II). There it is apt: dramatically, its hopeful sentiments relieve the mounting tension of the long scena; musically, the passage enables Miss Neway to soar to the ledger lines. But at the end of the work, it seems a miscalculation. There it is dramatically inapt, for it signifies hope without any justification, and musically it is ineffective, for the vocal line, which clinches its earlier success, is absent. If, instead of what has justly been called a Hollywood finish, the composer had reverted there to the strange music heard earlier in this scene, *The Consul* would be an even finer work than it is.

In this regard Menotti may be reminded of Alban Berg, who was wisely persuaded by the first conductor of *Wozzeck* to change his original *ritardando* to the final three bars of that work to a heavily underlined *senza ritardando*. The cessation of the even movement of quavers proves vastly more effective there than their gradual slowing and—in the context—seems truer-to-life.

The Consul is essentially a document of the times, and what I have called the 'subconscious' interludes relieve, but do not efface, the impression of a powerful *verismo*. In a talk to the London Opera Circle Menotti revealed the 'originals' of three of his characters and their transposition into music. The idea of *The Consul* came not from some harrowing account of life 'somewhere in Europe' but from an incident he saw in a consulate in Switzerland where an incoherent woman, requiring some document, repeated herself distractedly to an unsympathetic secretary. England, and not a short story by Thomas Mann, supplied the Great Magadoff. In Oxford a few years ago Menotti saw a conjuror, who was also a hypnotist, make a group of undergraduates get up and dance and go through silly motions. He has become the Magician at the Consulate. In the little old Italian woman, Menotti has perpetuated a terrified peasant from the Abruzzi whom he met on an air-liner two years ago. Having never previously left her native village, she was going to America to join her daughter who had gone twenty years before. She expected to be flying in an open machine and was swathed in masses of clothing, insisted on standing, and gripped the seat in front. At the airport, there was no daughter. Frightened by the crowds, loud-speakers, forms to complete and without a word of English, she implored Menotti to remain with her. At last the daughter appeared, but by that time her mother was already a character in *The Consul*.

The performers at the Cambridge Theatre have made no less an impact than the work. Not only the words and music, but their singing and playing are included in the unusual integration of elements which make *The Consul* a success. Thomas Schippers is the born opera conductor: his flexible control of a tricky score compels the highest praise. Marie Powers' performance as the Mother has great pathos, even though she tends, prima-donna-wise, to dominate the stage. The lovely voices of Mario Marlo as the Foreign Woman and Gloria Lane as the Secretary

make memorable things of their parts; so does Norman Kelly who, as the Magician, produces doves, rabbits, top A's and B flats with equal ease. Finally there is Patricia Neway's unforgettable Magda Sorel. The consul never grants her visa, but *The Consul* gives her a passport to stardom.

DON JUAN AND DALI

RAMON D. FARALDO

Drawings by Juan Infante Galan

On All Souls' Day in some parts of Spain, country people lay a special place at table for the dead. Don Juan Tenorio makes the same gesture when he reserves a place at dinner for the dead Comendador Don Gonzalo de Ulloa, with the difference, of course, that Don Juan had killed his guest, while the dead peasants died by the will of God. This is only one of the many gestures of Don Juan in Zorrilla's play that appeals to the atavism of the Spaniards. People quote whole passages of the play by heart, feeling that they themselves are part of it. Year after year it is performed on All Souls' Day because it is felt to constitute a sort of homage to death. In the morning people take flowers to the graves and in the afternoon they go to the local theatre or village hall to see *Don Juan Tenorio*. So it has gone on for a century and so most probably will it continue.

There could not be a people better qualified than the Spanish to understand that fantastic mixture of anti-social exuberance and superstition which goes to make up '*libertinaje*'; nor have there been any writers better qualified than ours to catch and pepetuate its spirit.

An atheistic Don Juan, like Molière's, would not have been effective in Spain; he had to believe for his blasphemy to have any significance. The play is not a burlesque to be given at carnival time; it is, as I have said, performed on All Souls' Day, the most serious of all days of the year, when the only theatres open are those which present the great struggle of the world, the flesh and the devil, a theme which naturally attracts people who normally use a surprisingly rhetorical language, even when 'carrying on', who enjoy the sight of blood and who literally believe in hell-fire.

José Zorrilla y Moral (1817–39), of all the Spanish Romantics, had the greatest influence on popular literature. As a poet he is superficial, spirited, rhetorical and fiery, with a lyrical intuition which is expressed too fluently in a language adapted from classical poetry to the taste of the middle classes. Many other Romantics excel him in passion and delicacy, for example, Becquer or Espronced, but none of them had the same sureness of touch or sense of theatre. He first attracted some attention by reading a long poem at the funeral of a famous writer of the time. He was for a time in the service of the Emperor Maximilian in Mexico, and, true to the destiny of a Romantic poet, he was first crowned with golden laurels in the Alhambra by Queen Isabella and afterwards died in a garret. He wrote his *Don Juan Tenorio* in twenty-one days when he was hard pressed and promptly sold it for a few pesetas. This was in 1844 and the play, as I said, has been put on every year since without fail.

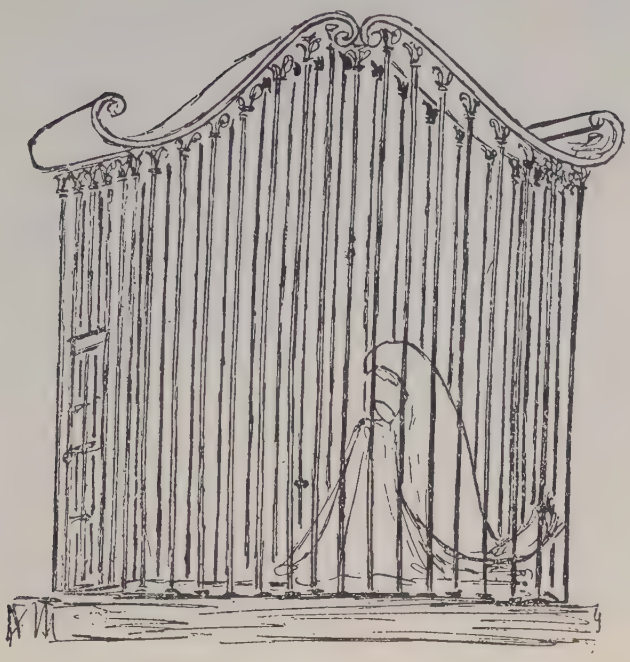
Lope de Vega and Amescua partially created the Spanish Don Juan, but it was Tirso de Molina (1572–1684) who first gave him a definite form. Tirso presented, in stiff and rigid verse, an active, maleficent Don Juan who was, in the end, dragged down to Hell by his guest. There were many other seventeenth-century versions, in particular those of Zamora and Canizares, which presented a swaggering, cynical bully—the *burlador*—to win the

applause of the rabble. Zorrilla made use of all these sources, and also drew on Merimée's *Souls in Purgatory* and Dumas's *Mañare*, but he took the main elements of the play from Tirso. His only real innovation, which he made because he was a Romantic, was to make Doña Inés intervene—a timid but effective embodiment of the eternal feminine redeeming the eternal masculine—to save her lover from his fate.

In Zorrilla's version another dissolute character, called Don Luis Mejía, is introduced as a friend to Don Juan . The two of them have made a wager on which of them can commit most 'atrocities' within one year. The play opens when they meet again at the Hostería del Laurel in Seville during Carnival Week, and out of a tremendous boasting competition Don Juan emerges the champion. Don Diego Tenorio and the Comendador de Ulloa, who have just arranged a family alliance, overhear all this and reveal themselves. Don Juan defies his father and the Comendador breaks the agreement to marry his daughter Doña Inés to Don Juan. Don Juan then decides to crown his victory by a double act of prowess, by conquering Doña Ana de Pantoja—whom Mejía was to marry next day—and by seducing a novice, Doña Inés de Ulloa herself. Both objects are accomplished. He obtains Doña Ana by pretending to be Don Luis, and abducts Doña Inés with help of a procuress he has bribed, called Brígida. He carries the girl off to his house on the banks of the the Guadalquivir. There he becomes captivated by her and her one dream is to reform him. The Comendador and Don Luis, arriving in pursuit, scoff at this dream, thinking that he is simply promising to reform as a means of avoiding their vengeance. Don Juan kills them and escapes from Seville.

Returning many years later, he finds that his father is dead and on his deathbed has ordered his palace to be turned into a pantheon dedicated to Don Juan's victims. 'If I took a good life from you,' he exclaims, 'I have given you a better burial!' The image of Doña Inés presides over the frozen ranks of stone effigies. Don Juan gives way to a monologue discussing sorrow and pride, at the end of which he gives the Comendador the famous invitation to dinner. At the dinner there are present a Captain Centellas and another friend. The Comendador appears and announces their immediate death. Centellas thinks that the apparition is a trick and, deeply insulted, he challenges Don Juan and kills him. Once again in the cemetery Don Juan is about to be dragged down to Hell. A single moment of repentance, induced by the pleading ghost of Doña Inés, frees him from eternal damnation; because—to sum up—'He is the God of Mercy, the God of Don Juan Tenorio.' Beautiful flowers unfold from the tombs, and the souls of Don Juan and Doña Inés 'like two brilliant lights' are seen rising out of their mouths and floating into the wings.

Why should this lachrymose version, in which almost every dramatic effect is



sacrificed, and there are four acts of repentance to one of *libertinaje*, have ousted the traditional swaggering Don Juan of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? That the blustering elder type is still dearly loved can be seen from the popularity of Errol Flynn pictures and of the preposterous new Spanish film of Don Juan. But Zorrilla's hero will, I think, always retain his privileged position. He is hyper-sensitive, obsessed by himself and his own frenzy. He pursues neither happiness nor sexual pleasure; he is pursuing his own self through the most extreme stimuli. Every amorous or bloody enterprise is a destruction of the other person; it is fuel that adds to the great flame of his pride.

At all events, Zorrilla's version is traditional, and this for many years has meant a rigidly conventional setting. Chairs, doors and windows have become as 'just so' as the back kitchen of the Abbey Theatre or the Louis XV drawing-room Comédie Française. The guests at the inn who 'overhear' Don Juan's boasting *must* be seated in full view at two corner tables. Duels, drinking scenes, and death scenes can be altered only at the risk of a scandal, and if the local company cannot manage all the traditional properties, at least they will do their best.

During the last two seasons, however, the play has been re-set for the production at the Teatro Mario Guerrero by Salvador Dali. Dali's talents, whatever else they may be, are essentially theatrical; and this new undertaking (he made the masks and even the statues for the graveyard scene himself) may be the justification for the whole career since he left Barcelona. Needless to say, it met with a great deal of opposition, especially from the actors, who were miserable without their accustomed exits and entrances and space to deliver their tirades. They were, however, mollified by the exceptionally long run.

The first scene, in the text, represents an interior of the Andalusian inn. Dali has designed an exterior, with the characters around a great table before the main entrance to the inn. In two low windows, open on to the street, Diego Tenorio and Ulloa listen to Don Juan's story. (They used always to be shown seated at two corner tables.) There are brass lamps, a harsh and discordant atmosphere and a funereal touch about the figures. Don Juan

is dressed in Renaissance style, with a cobalt-blue suit and a crest of feathers.[1] This time the symbol of Don Juan is a fighting-cock. The listeners round the table wear white masks and harshly-coloured shrouds. Dali converts Mejías' squire into a surrealist page, adorning him with hoods and other attributes of burlesque and giving him an ineffable appearance that is a mixture of Raphael and Dali.

In the second scene he continues the inversion, also exaggerating the scheme of the original decoration. It was a street scene, showing the outside of Doña Ana's house, and Dali inverts the arrangement so as to reveal the inside of the house. Two walls form an angle with great window-gratings showing the street outside. It is not actually the street, though, but a fabulous and cadaverous countryside of a greenish colour with a line of cypresses, marking the course of the road, climbing the hills and disappearing into the sky. What goes on outside can be seen and heard through the grills, so that, although it gives a quality of originality, the people outside all appear cut off at the waist. Doña Ana is dressed in a beautiful bridal-gown; Brígida, the procuress who assists Don Juan to approach his other victim, Doña Inés, is dressed to represent a crow with festoons of black feathers fastened on as a tail and also a head-dress which terminates in the beak of a bird of prey.

The cell of Doña Inés is the setting of the third scene, and here Dali's invention reaches its apex. Inspired by a line in the play that refers to the novice as a 'most beautiful dove', the cell has been converted into a great, white, rotating cage. Doña Inés appears dressed as a dove with a white feathered tunic covering her completely. As her seducer advances and takes her in his arms, this dress falls off; Doña Inés has lost her innocence. Action on the stage is rather slow because, to get in and out of the cage, the actors have to climb awkwardly through a small low door. The dress of the portress is a success, decorated with innumerable keys and designed in the form of a lock. The backcloth is a huge black curtain.

In the fourth setting Dali keeps the traditional arrangement of a balustrdaed room. His innovations are confined to the decoration. There is a sofa that begins as a swan and finishes as a sphinx, half covered with a black cloth bespangled with gold. The scenery is supported on columns decorated with gargoyles and caryatides, and is wide open to a view of the Guadalquivir at night. On the deserted banks there rests a long patch of shadow and the perspective is closed by great mountains in the distance, where there are towers from which spring figures carrying flags. The love scene between Don Juan and Inés takes place while the actors have their backs to the audience, which has the effect of making the traditional scenery seem less isolated and more plastic.

The setting of the cemetery, which opens the second act, has been given by Dali the appearance of a chocolate-box. Three rows of rectangular niches, one on top of another, are at a certain moment illuminated inside to reveal through the transparent sides their prostrate inhabitants. Funereal tree-trunks hold up fragments of bones tied together with red and blue ribbons. On the right there is the recumbent statue of the Comendador, a fairly

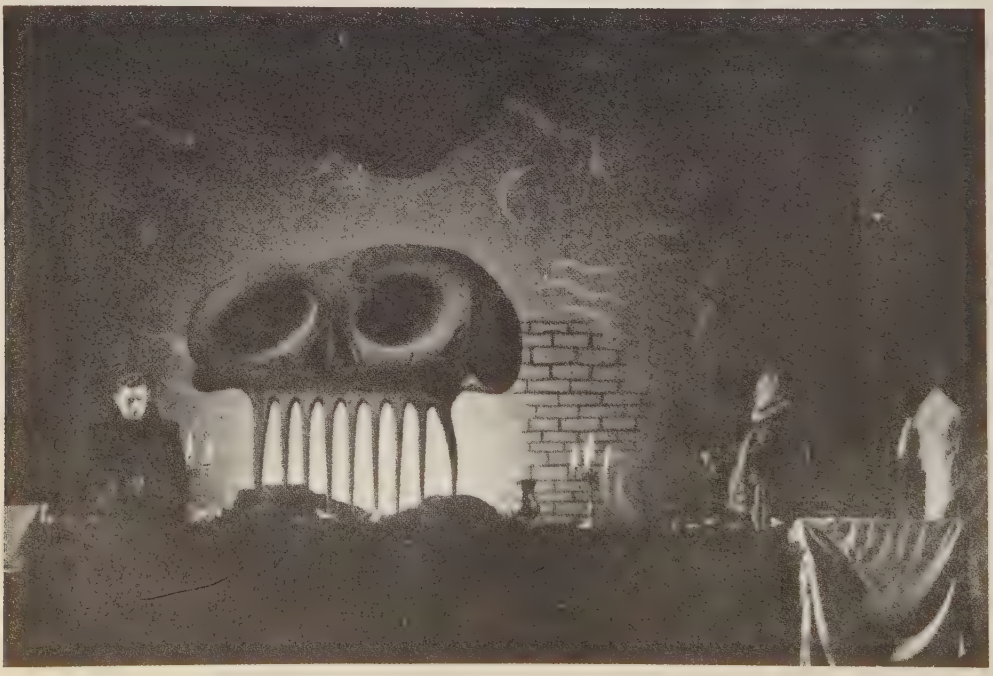
[1] All the costumes, with their animal references, are adapted from the pictures of Hieronymus Bosch

Above: *The exterior of the Hosteria del Laurel*

Below: *Doña Ana's house*

Above: *Don Juan's house on the banks of the Guadalquiver*

Below: *The supper scene in Don Juan's dining-room*



faithful adaptation of 'The Dying Gaul', and on the left the statue of the Blessed Stephanie, of Bernini—more or less masculinised for the tomb of Don Luis. A pedestal occupies the centre of the scene and on this there is the bust of Doña Inés, swathed in veils, which collapses like an empty glove when the dead maiden appears. Above the niches there is a large space, where the burial of Don Juan passes by when mentioned in the poem and three hooded and ragged figures drag along some bones attached to a cord—the most successful allusion achieved in the Dalian version. Don Juan is dressed in black without any suggestion at all of feathers. The sculptor who planned the pantheon is dressed in the traditional style of Michelangelo.

The supper scene, last but one of the play, is set in Don Juan's dining-room, without any revolutionary innovation. A long table is covered by a black cloth, with candle-sticks and the dinner service, and there are immense armchairs with white padding at the heads. Don Juan occupies the one on the left, the other empty one awaits the guest, which traditionally appears through the wall. Dominating the scene and suspended above the centre of the table there is an elliptical board representing storm-clouds and lightning. At the knocking of the apparition, announcing its arrival, the lights go out and in the semi-darkness that follows, the Comendador rises in the chair and a huge skull descends from above. Its huge teeth, like the prongs of a comb, fasten themselves in the other guests. Black-hooded figures, as though out of Seville's Holy Week procession, cross the stage bearing a monstrous swan. Between its wings there rests a silver coffin—an illusion to the death of Doña Inés when her voice begs Tenorio to consider the warning of the Comendador.

The last setting of the play is again the pantheon. The light that illuminated the niches is extinguished. The dead rise from their tombs, and silhouettes, dressed in close-fitting black, move about the stage. Don Juan, stretched on the ground, sits up when the light appears. The chocolate-box has been transformed into a Spanish writing-desk. The burial of the libertine passes above the niches in the background. When the intervention of Doña Inés obtains divine mercy, two arcs of youths, their bare bodies wrapped in white linen sheets, surround the glorified lovers.

Both this year and last year (when he introduced into the inn scene the celebrated plates which crashed from the wall and broke into a thousand pieces) Dali departs not only from the author's stage directions but from the very text of the play. He creates a sort of allusive ballet, embedded in the colloquial lines of the poem. Instead of imitating the time and place—which are used by stage-designers to hold the action together—Dali makes his scenographic action penetrate the very souls of the characters, even his mythological references. It is not so much that he imagines the scenery or costumes as poetic projections, or comic and sarcastic ones, through which to express sympathy or revulsion. The strictly artisan aim of the designer is, to his mind, psychological collaboration. In this way he is author, actor and chorus at the same time.

It seems to be Dali's intention to produce a new scenography every year, apparently indefinitely. The attention of the great Catalan practical joker has become obsessed by the myth of the joker from Seville. Considering his method of working—limited to a large extent to making the images of the poet plastic—such an undertaking should not be difficult for him.

VAN DE CAPPELLE
RIVER SCENE WITH STATE BARGE

BERTRAM NICHOLLS

THE materials of which this picture is composed were much to Van de Cappelle's taste, and no wonder, since he could use them to such purpose—shipping in a flat calm with soft rolling clouds hanging above still water. There must be some wind overhead to mould the shapes of the clouds, and in the offing the ships' sails are gently filled; but close at hand there is scarcely enough air stirring to lift a drooping pennant, and the sails hang idly where they are not furled. The effect is very broad and very luminous, and as we look at the picture, we seem to be ourselves in the scene, enveloped in its vaporous atmosphere. We have here a striking example of the forgotten art of combining great breadth with the minutest detail. The boats are crowded with figures, and they are not mere suggestions of figures; they form good shapes, but they are not merely good shapes; they are individuals, some of whom you would recognise if you met them in the street. We see how they are dressed, down to the very plumes in their hats and the buttons on their clothes. And they are all behaving as people do behave in such circumstances; they are all doing something even where it is only idling. And it is not only the figures. We see the planks of the ships' timbers, the elaborate ornamentation on a ship's stern, the fine lines of the rigging, gulls flying about, and a horse stretching over the gunwale to reach the water. Yet nothing could be broader or simpler than the whole effect.

All this seems brought about by very simple means. It is painted on wood over a reddish ground. There is little positive colour apart from a few notes on flags and pennants. Indeed, the whole sky has a deceptive appearance of having been painted with black and white with a little blue, these colours being influenced to a greater or less degree by the warm ground showing through. Painting is never quite so simple as that, but that is the basis on which the painter worked, varying it with subtle modifications. It is very thinly painted. Excepting in the light cloud masses, there is very little impasto. The brownish sails are scarcely more than a stain laid over the sky when it had dried. The same method, with a little added detail, sufficed for many of the figures, for many of the masts, and for all the cordage.

The vicissitudes of three hundred years have not been without their effect on this thin paint. It has naturally become more transparent, and some of it has been removed, so that the grain of the wood panel can be seen over large areas, with the red ground lying in its interstices. Cleaning has removed a softening veil, leaving the darks a little darker, a little 'paintier', and a little heavier; and there are passages where the hand of the restorer can be discerned. None of these changes need seriously mar our pleasure in the picture. In all essentials it is still there, and still commands our admiration. It is even likely that, as the new varnish mellows, and before that process goes too far, it will gain in beauty, passing through a period (perhaps for the last time, for the paint is very thin) when it reaches its highest point of perfection.

Monopoly is a hard taskmaster. Roger Manvell, critic and broadcaster, discusses the American radio system and the monopoly of the B.B.C.

THE CROWDED AIR

ROGER MANVELL

PERHAPS we recoil too much from the statistics about our modern 'mass media', as UNESCO calls them. In fifty years the cinema has risen from nothing to the command of audiences amounting to some 300 million a week. In the same period the popular press has risen to the extent that over eight million tons of newsprint are used each year. (In the U.S. fifty million of their large newspapers are sold each day.) The estimated number of regular listeners to radio has grown in half this time to be 425 million, and television is already hot on the heels of sound broadcasting. What will civilisation be like in 1984 with these new powers of verbal and visual communication at our disposal?

The pointed contrast between the American and British radio systems brings into focus the problem of what are the proper fields in which public and private enterprise may function with the best results for the community. In the past private enterprise has produced many excellent things; almost all inventions, like that of printing, appeared as a result of individual initiative. But the administrative and economic complexity of modern life make invention and research by private enterprise more and more expensive and difficult, and so more and more dependent on capturing the patronage of large masses of the public. America, with its innate fear of any restriction imposed by the State, let radio develop unhindered along commercial lines, until the Federal Communications' Commission had to be established by the Government in 1934 to bring some sort of order to the wave-length chaos when the programmes of hundreds of stations were interfering with each other in a vast aerial traffic jam. There are over 3,000 stations in operation at the present time. British radio, on the other hand, achieved, through the single-minded executive genius of Lord Reith, that status of a unique public-service monopoly protected from any form of competition except from sources outside this country. It is of a certain historical interest now that there were powerful advocates in the first years of public broadcasting in America for making radio non-commercial. 'It is inconceivable,' said Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover at the first Annual Radio Conference in Washington, 'that we should allow so great a possibility for service . . . to be drowned in advertising matter.'[1]

II

American radio has so far escaped from any threat of real Government intervention, except in the form of having to obtain an operating licence for each station from the F.C.C. The wave-lengths, as Siepmann puts it, are 'deeded in perpetuity' by the Communications Act of 1934 to the people of America.

> 'They constitute a public domain to which the broadcaster is given conditional and temporary access, and once admitted into this domain, he may pursue profits for himself. The broadcaster may construct transmitters, studios, and so on, which, of course, are his private property. But they cannot be used except under a license granted by the Commission and subject to conditions.'

The powers of the Commission to interfere with the subject-matter of what is broadcast are virtually negligible, except that, in political matters, stations are expected to exercise a fair balance as between the times given to rival points of view; and there is an article in the Communications' Act which urges the Commission to watch that public-service radio is not eliminated in favour of all-commercial radio.

Monopoly in American radio has taken on a complicated form with the expansion of the four great networks, from which the smaller regional and local stations take the

[1] Quoted in *Radio, Television and Society*, by Charles A. Siepmann, Oxford University Press, London. Cumberlege. 28s. 6d.

greater part of their programmes in circumstances which often leave them little power in the timing of those programmes which they originate themselves. For all those who regard radio as a public service, the dilemma arising out of the conflict between public interest and private profit often seems incapable of adequate solution. Advertisers are only interested in reaching the largest audiences during the peak listening hours. As Siepmann puts it:

> 'Advertisers concentrate on programs with potential mass market to the exclusion (with some rare and honourable exceptions) of programs of wide interest and inherent merit from a public-interest point of view.'

and

> 'Networks and their affiliates have allowed themselves to be jockeyed into a position in which they are no longer masters in their own houses. By and large, advertisers, not networks, determine (at least in the main evening hours) the over-all balance of program services offered to the public. Such abdication of control over program planning puts broadcasters 'in queer' with the F.C.C. (should it ever decide to fulfil its statutory responsibility), which holds stations, not advertisers, accountable for program service in the public interest.' (*Ibidem*, p. 55)

Siepmann is also very concerned about the absence of critical attitudes in the majority of American listeners, most of whom (80 per cent) accept what they get as either 'excellent' or 'good'. American radio concentrates on what listeners take best in their stride—comedy, variety, soap opera, the news and the commentators. Giving the public what it wants is the hallmark of American radio. The industry, to quote Siepmann again, claims that:

> 'Radio, indeed, is but one of many working illustrations of the principle, tested by time and experience, that free, competitive enterprise and the pursuit of private profits are synonymous with public welfare and the people's satisfaction. Some venture even further and identify the principle with the concept of democracy itself.'

Educational radio has virtually failed in America, with a few exceptions among the University-sponsored local stations. The advent of television, too, is tending to lower standards still further by increasing the competition to attract the eyes as well as the ear of audiences who can be persuaded to buy commercial products during the course of their broadcast entertainment.

A considerable part of Siepmann's important book is devoted to an examination of the social principles which make broadcasting a factor in developing an enlightened public, which he regards as essential at the present time. He condemns the loose and muddled thinking which surrounds the interpretation of what freedom really means in phrases like 'freedom of speech' and 'the freedom of the air', and insists that responsibility increases with the range of the audience reached by what is said. He feels that the time has come for American radio to increase considerably the proportion of 'public service' broadcasting which it is supposed to undertake and which is now so largely outweighed by the kind of programme the commercial sponsor feels will reach the the widest and most susceptible audience.

III

Against this background of Siepmann's interpretation of the dilemma of American radio and television, it is interesting to look at the arguments for maintaining British radio in its present form.

We start with the fundamental point of view advocated by Lord Reith:

> 'So the responsibility as at the outset conceived, and despite all discouragements pursued, was to carry into the greatest number of homes everything that was best in every department of human knowledge, endeavour and achievement; and to avoid whatever was or might be hurtful. In earliest years, accused of setting out to give the public not what it wanted but what the B.B.C. thought it should have, the answer was that few knew what they wanted, fewer what they needed. In any event, it was better to over-estimate than to under-estimate. If another policy had

been adopted—that of the lowest common denominator—what then? Probably nobody would have protested; it would have been quite natural.'

(*Into the Wind*, p. 101)

The majority, as Siepmann points out, would probably have been quite satisfied with commercial programmes, had they known nothing else from the start. However, a Gallup Poll published in the *News Chronicle* gave a verdict of 46 per cent against, and 42 per cent for, the idea of commercial radio in Britain. Allowing for the submerged tenth who never know anything, rather over a third of the general public would be prepared to take the risk which the Beveridge Committee feel would not be in the public interest. But as the Report puts it:

'Dependence upon sponsors for the means of broadcast communication means that the nature of the communication is in the last result dictated for the wrong aims and often takes forms which public opinion in this country would reject. If the people of Britain want broadcasting essentially as a public service, they must be prepared to pay the cost of this service directly. We believe that they do want this and are prepared to pay for it.' (Vol. 1, p. 98.)

Having gone this first step towards maintaining the B.B.C. intact, the next major argument was over monopoly. Should there be several public service corporations, or should there be only one? Here public opinion as expressed by the multitude of evidence placed before the Committee was more divided. The principle of heightened quality through competition is still dear to the British, and the apparent absence of competition in the B.B.C. has always seemed a weakness in the final case for its monopoly of the air. The Memorandum of the Radiowriters' Association submitted to the Beveridge Committee expresses the essence of this point:

'The consideration of alternative markets is one which every writer has in mind when engaged on a play, novel, biography or other creative work. If one manager rejects a play, there are others; if one publisher refuses a book, he has a rival across the street. But the writer of a radio script has no other market. Radio material is rarely of use in any other medium though talks and short stories can occasionally be collected and published. In fact the radiowriter is working for a monopoly, selling in a permanent buyers' market, and if for any reason he displeases his sole employer, the B.B.C., not only is his work wasted, but he may find it more difficult to dispose of further scripts. This, in the opinion of the Association, is *a priori* an unhealthy state of things, both for the employing body, in this case the B.B.C., and the writer.'

(Report, Vol. II, p. 490)

The Beveridge Committee, however, decided to maintain the monopoly, while at the same time advocating a policy of partial devolution as between Headquarters and the Regions and Headquarters and Television. The argument for the single authority is put forward in what is possibly the most important paragraph in the Report:

'There cannot be more than imperfect competition, between perhaps three or four broadcasting authorities of equal rank. Right use of the power conferred on these authorities cannot be secured by competition; it must be sought through the conditions of the Charter by which the power is conferred. Second, to make broadcast programmes directly and automatically dependent on the preferences expressed by listeners would be contrary to the pursuit of the highest social purpose of broadcasting, which in the last resort is one of education. It is not undemocratic to say this, any more than it is undemocratic to say that the duty of a University teacher is not to say what he thinks the greatest number of his audience want to hear, but to say what he believes to be the truth. The duty of the broadcasting authority is not to please the greatest possible number of listeners but to keep open the channel for communication of ideas of all kinds, popular and unpopular. This second reason is the more important of the two reasons why we do not seek in market competition the means of controlling the use of broadcasting power. We want

more and freer competition than exists at present, but it must be competition in service, not competition for listeners.'

(Vol. 1, p. 164)

On the other hand, the Committee, as the *News Chronicle* pointed out, went a very long way towards advocating the establishment of alternative centres of radio production when it recommended that Frequency Modulation stations should be set up by the Universities and by Local Authorities. It is not quite clear how far these would offer an alternative outlet to creative workers in radio, or how far it would be the policy of those who granted the licence to limit the output of these stations to purely local interests.

The Beveridge Committee, finally, accepted Sir William Hayley's view that television is 'an extension of broadcasting' and not a medium for which a separate corporation should be set up to pursue an independent path. Nevertheless, 'within the general framework of the B.B.C., television should enjoy greater autonomy than it has had hitherto.'

The Report received a very favourable press for so moderate a statement. The Press were not always so favourable to the B.B.C. in its earlier days. For example, the *Manchester Guardian* was favourable; a temperate concern over the B.B.C.'s monopoly was expressed in *The Economist* and the *News Chronicle*; *The Times* was concerned at clogging B.B.C. policy with too many safeguards through 'administrative gadgets'; the *Daily Express* was favourable, but wished television could be separated from the B.B.C.; articles in *The New Statesman* and the *Daily Telegraph* expressed fear of 'respectable uniformity' on the one hand, and the fact that 'moderation can be itself a form of bias' on the other, while *The Times* added that the B.B.C.'s greatest peril will seem to most detached observers to be playing for safety for fear of getting into trouble.

It remains for Siepmann, whilst praising the B.B.C. for its outstanding achievements, to deliver a *coup de grace* from the point of view of a newer world than ours. He considers the B.B.C.'s monopoly to be illogical, and to be based on the fear that an unsuitable and outdated form of culture would be overthrown by competition.

> 'The fact is that the majority of those who conceive and direct not only the Third Program but the whole range of the B.B.C.'s program services are graduates of Oxford or Cambridge Universities, and they exemplify both the strength and weaknesses of their Alma Mater. For even today Oxford and Cambridge represent a tradition of education and a concept of culture more nearly suited to the social structure of Great Britain in the late eighteenth century than to that of 1950. This cultural concept is typified by the term once applied to the finished product of Britain's selective system of education: he was a scholar and gentleman.
>
> It is in this sense that the character of British broadcasting would seem to some to represent both an outmoded concept of culture and a misplaced emphasis on the qualities of mind and character that men are presently called upon to display.'

The B.B.C. is as British as Britannia. It has all our faults and all our bourgeois desire for quiet and acceptable respectability. It is difficult for us to envisage other and different forms of radio operating in this country now that we are grounded in 'public service' broadcasting with its elaborate codes of ethics, which derive from our own peculiar educational, social and administrative codes. It is to be hoped, however, that when the B.B.C. has finally been given the key to its own future after so long a probation, it will open as many doors as it can to the responsible broadcaster, and will encourage him to speak his mind in his own name, whether his code be that of the Universities or not. The timid listener can always switch off, or learn to be less timid. For if the challenge represented by Siepmann and his world is to be met, the B.B.C., to justify its monopoly, must be prepared to keep the British air as wide-open and fresh as that talent at its disposal makes possible. It may even have to fight good taste as well as bad and oppose the cultured as well as the uncultured. Monopoly will be a hard taskmaster.

NEW BOOKS

THE LIFE OF JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES

By R. F. Harrod. *Macmillan.* 25s.

Reviewed by Max Beloff

John Maynard Keynes was beyond question one of the outstanding figures in the public life of this country, in the age that embraced the two world wars; indeed it may be doubted if anyone who never held political office, whose parliamentary career was confined to a brief closing period in the House of Lords, and whose official employment by the Government also accounted for but a small part of his life, has ever had such influence in practical affairs, besides making a contribution to the general intellectual atmosphere that is likely long to outlive him. A man so remarkable is bound to be the subject of controversy in his lifetime and afterwards, and it was a bold decision on the part of his Oxford disciple, Mr. Roy Harrod, to undertake his biography while the dust of the controversies was still rising from the ground. His reason for doing so was weighty—that much of the record had to be gathered now from the living—and his temerity has been abundantly justified. Despite the necessity of including assessments of Keynes's contributions to economic theory which the non-economist may find even harder going than Mr. Harrod suspects, he has written a long and fascinating book with passages of deep insight and of real drama, a book which holds one's attention from beginning to end, and which raises issues that go beyond the validity of Keynes's theories or the achievements of his own public work. Mr. Harrod's book ranks at once as a major contribution to our biographical literature—the best biography of an English intellectual, perhaps, since Sir George Trevelyan's life of Macaulay, published exactly three quarters of a century ago. It is a book to which the future historian, if he is wise, will turn, as an illuminating record of a period in British social and intellectual history which already seems to be slipping into the past.

No doubt there are criticisms that can, and will, be made. The bearers of rival economic doctrines are not noted for charitable feelings towards one another. And students of political history will find it difficult to accept in its entirety Mr. Harrod's refutation of the attack upon Keynes made by Etienne Mantoux, and by some eminent British historians as well, for his share in undermining the intellectual and moral foundations of the Versailles Peace. The man of truly liberal sympathies, the man who believes that economics rather than pure politics is the dominant force in human affairs—and these descriptions obviously fit Mr. Harrod as well as Keynes—is unlikely to be at his best when dealing with the terrible problem set by Germany. Keynes's fantastic notion on the morrow of the 1919 Peace (a notion which Mr. Harrod does not mention), that all would be well if German ingenuity were to have the exploitation of Russian resources, is scarcely evidence of political insight.

Even the tremendous services rendered by Keynes to this country during and immediately after the Second World War —services which cost him his life—should not be allowed to obliterate the fact that, however unwittingly, he had by his writings contributed to the passivity with which the world watched German might revive. At this moment, above all, that fact should not be overlooked.

But this measure of partisanship is not more than must be expected from a biographer so clearly in sympathy with his subject. And one must not exaggerate.

Despite his unwillingness to be a mere don, or a mere intellectual—the biography would be a notable one if only for the picture of Keynes's early career at Cambridge and his links with 'Bloomsbury', with whose perpetually critical attitude his own more constructive genius is shown increasingly at variance—Keynes's main work was achieved as a writer and teacher. His main purpose was to make it possible to hold intellectually to the essential tenets of Liberalism, while abandoning the cruder aspects of laissez-faire. To act for social and intellectual betterment, to provide more and more people not merely with physical amenities but with the things of the mind and the spirit, but do so without falling into the sterile crudities of Socialism: that was the objective which Keynesian economics were intended to make possible—a Liberalism at home and abroad that he held to, as Mr. Harrod shows, with a fundamental consistency.

It is too soon to assess the measure of his success. It may be that Keynes's career should be taken not as foreshadowing things to come, but as the sunset brilliance of British Liberalism. Such, I suspect, is his biographer's view. It is not simply that Keynes benefited from the independence that the fortune his financial acumen made possible—an independence increasingly rare—or that the wide humanity of his approach to the problems of the age is one that our academic specialisms are doing their best to eradicate; it is rather that his work depended, as Mr. Harrod points out, on certain assumptions that Keynes himself may not always have realised. It depended upon the belief that great nations would continue to act upon the advice of the truly expert, that what mattered was the conversion of an *élite*. These beliefs which Mr. Harrod styles 'the presuppositions of Harvey Road', after the quiet middle-class intellectual home into which Keynes was born, and in which his gifted parents outlived him, do not seem so self-evident today. Even in the English-speaking world, popular passions seem mightier than intellectual convictions; the essential stability of the world into which Keynes was born seems far off indeed; we follow uncharted courses; the more reason for looking back.

4

'I never read a book before reviewing it: it prejudices a man so.'—

SYDNEY SMITH

THIS does not of course apply to such distinguished critics as Harold Nicolson and Raymond Mortimer, who read and gave immediate leading reviews (in *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times*) to GERALD BULLETT'S new biography SYDNEY SMITH —a fascinating portrait of a great wit and a great reformer, enriched with a copious selection from his writings. (15/-)

MICHAEL JOSEPH

GRAHAM SUTHERLAND

with an Introduction by Robert Melville. *The Ambassador Publishing Co. Ltd.* 52s. 6d.

Reviewed by Eric Newton

We have had to wait long enough for a book on Graham Sutherland worthy of his stature. The little volume devoted to him in the Penguin Modern Painters series, published in 1943, was good enough to be going on with, but today it is no more than an interim report—just as this book will, in its turn, become an interim report, for Sutherland is essentially an artist who cannot stand still.

If we value our artists, such books are necessary; for works of art do not travel easily, and a book containing a generous supply of full-page plates, an adequate number of which are in colour, can reach a wider public than the pictures themselves. Not that a colour plate, however good, can ever be a substitute for a painting, but twenty colour plates have a cumulative effect which can, and does, prepare the mind for full acceptance of an original picture.

For that reason, any book containing well-printed reproductions of an important artist's work is to be welcomed. And in the case of Sutherland, for a number of reasons, the larger the plates, the better. Some artists suffer considerably from reduction in size: they require a minimum area if they are to make themselves clear. The little inflections that correspond, in a sense, to punctuation marks in Sutherland's paintings and drawings, are all-important. Lose them and the full meaning is lost. So the unusually large size of the page (11 in. by 14 in.) in this volume is not merely the result of a publisher's attempt to be impressive. Amplitude in book reproduction is both rare and heartening today: but in this case it was necessary.

The book deals mainly with the chief paintings and a representative selection of drawings done during the last seven years —a period that will certainly turn out to be a critical one in the painter's career, for, in the middle of it, he may be said to have discovered the existence of the Mediterranean, that fructifying ingredient in so much of European art. It is of little importance that the outward signs of this discovery are seen in details like the substitution of palm leaves and large insects for gnarled oaks and thorn heads. The same pair of eyes was at work in both cases and extracted from both the same angular, urgent rhythms. What is important is a gradually increasing radiance, a steadiness, a classic flavour that begins to permeate his work but which has not yet developed to the full. If this essentially Gothic artist can absorb Hellenic influences without losing his personality, he will find himself not only the *chef d'école* in his own country but one of the chief creators of a new tradition in European art.

I make no comment on Mr. Melville's introduction, nor do I feel competent to do so. He and I see Sutherland in different terms and have even different notions about the function of interpretative art criticism. But it may be that his introduction will induce a good many readers to look more closely and to think more sensitively about the illustrations. Critical writing can aim either at explanation or at incantation. Mr. Melville is an exponent of the latter method.

STANISLAVSKY, A LIFE

By David Magarshack. *MacGibbon & Kee.* 25s.

Reviewed by V. C. Clinton Baddeley

On the green dust-cover of this life of Stanislavsky is a drawing of two beautiful hands, gently folded together—hands which lay hold on the reader's sleeve, for he turns back again and again to look at them. Inside is an excellent photograph of Stanislavsky taken in 1937, the year before his death, one hand to his head, the other holding a pen, his eyes lost in speculation. It is an impressive opening to the story of this extraordinary man, who, starting as an amateur actor and producer, created (with the help of Nemirovich-Danchenko) the Moscow Art Theatre, revolutionised the Russian stage and influenced methods of stage production all over the world. The greatness of Stanislavsky lay in the fact that he was never satisfied. His whole life was a quest for perfection. He wrote ruthless criticisms of himself as actor and producer. He tried everything, abandoned much, and, after all his triumphs, was still seeking the laws of acting up to the

day of his death. 'If you must make mistakes,' he said, 'let them be big ones'—big enough to be worth argument, he meant, big enough to demand correction.

The history of the Russian Theatre is a strange, exciting business and the cool, dispassionate manner in which David Magarshack records it is particulalry well calculated to throw the story into sharp relief. Most interesting are the parts that deal with Chekov. When the Chekov plays were first performed in England, they were misunderstood. It is gratifying to find that they were equally misunderstood by Stanislavsky, who would have it that *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard* were tragedies. Chekov 'was sincerely convinced that *The Cherry Orchard*, in particular, was a gay comedy', wrote Stanislavsky—and apparently it never occurred to him that Chekov could have been the best judge of his own plays.

A PORTRAIT OF LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

Drawn from his letters and diaries and introduced by John Russell.

The Dropmore Press. 2 gns.

Reviewed by Hugo Manning

This book helps to bring to life the personality of a major prose stylist and master of aphorisms who was determined to 'dwell in the contemplation of eternal essences, to behold Beauty with the eye of the mind and to feed on the shadows of perfection.' There has been—and perhaps still is—a tendency to belittle the achievement and status of Logan Pearsall Smith. It is true that, for a man with a private income who lived to be an octogenarian, he did not produce very much. But that is obviously not the reason for the undercurrent of indifference to which he was subjected. One of the reasons might be that his dedication to purism and aestheticism at a time when the literary world was succumbing to journalese and harsh experiment was seen by some as rather old-fashioned. It was also true that he did not reflect the *zeitgeist* as most other writers of his generation did. He tried to transcend ephemeral values and retain and reassess what seemed to be lasting and aesthetically satisfying.

A statement about the NEWS CHRONICLE

Below are extracts from a recent book 'The British General Election of 1950' by H. G. Nicholas, Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and Faculty Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford.

"It *(News Chronicle)* certainly conceived of itself as serving a popular but intelligent readership which did not wish to be led in the blinkers of any party.

* * * *

It was in keeping with this attitude that the paper's most distinctive election features were its Gallup Polls and its 'Great Debate'.

* * * *

For the first time in British election history, a whole-hearted attempt was made to bring before the readers of a single newspaper the whole range of party viewpoints presented by party leaders themselves.

* * * *

Straight news was not affected by the political leanings of the newspaper.

* * * *

The News Chronicle seemed commendably free of special attitudes towards most issues and individuals."

Towards the end of his life Logan Pearsall Smith wrote the following to the father of a newly-born son: 'As to what the world into which you have projected this infant will be like, I cannot send news that will be altogether reassuring. Whether it will be dominated by Beaverbrook, by Hitler, Stalin, Japan or America, I am rather glad I shall not live to see . . . The world I lived in for seventy-seven years was a golden one; I enjoyed it to the limit of enjoyment. But Golden Ages have their sunsets, and then the darkness falls.' This selection of his hitherto unpublished letters and diaries and the useful and well-written introduction by John Russell reveal the character and wisdom of a man for whom the fevers and darkness of an age were only of marginal significance.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

By Alastair Buchan and Oliver Villiers. *The Alcuin Press.* 8s. 6d.

Alistair Campbell, M.C., F.R.G.S., was killed in Burma in 1944 at the age of twenty-five. There was nothing romantic about his death—he was shot by a Japanese patrol—but his short life up till then reads like a romantic adventure. He did all the things that an undergraduate dreams of doing, and a great deal more. He sailed as an ordinary seaman to Brazil, travelled up the Amazon, toured the Middle East by himself, entered India by the Khyber Pass and pushed his way into Tibet, from which country he brought back enough new information to acquire a fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society—all this before he was nineteen. At Magdalen College, Oxford, he read Chinese, and took pot-shots at the dons, until the outbreak of war sent him into the Black Watch. After a conventional period of service in France, ending with Dunkirk, he volunteered for service in Abyssinia. There he came into his own, and commanded a 'very irregular unit' of Abyssinian cut-throats. There have since the end of the war been a number of books written by the commanders of irregular units. Many of them leave one doubtful of the value of the things they say they did, but there is no doubt about the value of Alistair Campbell's service.

CONFUCIUS, THE MAN AND THE MYTH

By H. G. Creel. *Routledge & Kegan Paul.* 25s.

Reviewed by Maurice Collis

This book is a determined attempt by a Chicago University Professor to disentangle the real Confucius from the figure which the Confucians of later ages gradually evolved. The same attempt has been made by previous writers, both in Europe and China. Curiously enough, the first to make it were the Jesuits who resided in Peking in the eighteenth century. Since then the apparatus of modern scholarship has been applied to the task. Professor Creel's essay in this field is the fruit of a protracted study of the original documents, a kind of scientific sifting, which American Universities can do very thoroughly because they are able to organise a more extended and specialised collaboration than is possible for the less richly-endowed universities on this side. Ultimately, however, the value of a book depends on the literary skill and human character of the man who puts together the pieces and fuses them into a whole. Professor Creel has made his book as accurate as infinite patience and care can make it, but the total result must be called an academic study which exposes the main elements of an intricate subject as they are apprehended today, rather than the sort of interpretation which owes its force to such things as felicitous phrasing and sudden insight, breadth of view and warmth of feeling.

Modern scholarship is now unanimous that the real Confucius can best (perhaps only) be found in the *Analects* which, as the name implies, is a collection of literary fragments, not a dramatic narrative like the Christian Gospels. This classic was put together after Confucius's death in 479 B.C. by his disciples, or perhaps by the disciples of his disciples. Its literary form, however, must have been the creation of one man of genius, for its style has a marmoreal quality, perfectly fashioned and distinctive. The only English literary translation of this ancient masterpiece is by Arthur Waley. Professor Creel gives his own

translations when he quotes, because he considers them closer to the original text than Dr. Waley's. The dilemma is that Professor Creel's renderings, lacking, as they do, beauty of literary expression, damage the purport of the original which resides as much in its style as in its sense. The extraordinary humanity, the endearing charm, the tender profundity and the amusing sweetness, which is the essence of the *Analects* and must have been Confucius's real character, can only be communicated in translation by consummate artistry.

HAMLET AND THE PIRATES

By D. S. Savage. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 9s.

Reviewed by Louis Adeane

In the First Quarto of *Hamlet*, Shakespeare employs no pirates; there, Hamlet's voyage to England is interrupted only by the 'contention of the windes'. Mr. Savage reflects that this was a pirated version of the play, and suggests that the interpolated pirate episode in the Second Quarto is an allusion to its literary fortunes.

His proofs lie mainly in Hamlet's account to Horatio of how he was captured by sea-robbers, and of how he tricked Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with a faked missive ordering their execution. Following a succession of puns in these passages, Mr. Savage discovers to us Shakespeare's story of how, finding his play taken by pirates, he did a deal with them, 'devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair', and included this covert reference to the transaction.

That the lines could hold such a burden is undeniable; Mr. Savage has something on the hook, but it is uncertain whether Shakespeare deliberately put it there, for the most persuasive parts of the evidence refer not to the pirates but to the two courtiers. It was not until after Hamlet Shakespeare had rewritten their letter that the pirate craft hove into view. Pirates being rare in the plays, one cannot know if Shakespeare always associated them with printers; ordinary sailors of the time were often pressmen of a sort. Mr. Savage carries his detection further, and his essay prompts continued speculation.

Victoria and Albert Museum

THE 'V & A' IS A MUSEUM OF FINE AND APPLIED ART of all countries, periods and styles, including oriental art. It is under the Ministry of Education. The collections include: Architectural Details, Arms and Armour, the Art of the Book, Bronzes, Carpets, Clocks, Costumes, Cutlery, Drawings, Embroideries, Enamels, Engravings, Fabrics, Furniture, Glass, Gold and Silversmiths' Work, Ironwork, Ivories, Jewellery, Lace, Lithographs, Manuscripts, Metalwork, Miniatures, Musical Instruments, Oil Paintings, Posters, Pottery and Porcelain, Prints, Sculpture, Stained Glass, Tapestries, Theatre Art, Vestments, Watches, Water-Colours, Woodwork.

The European collections are mostly of Post-Classical art, from Early Christian times to the 19th century.

The Museum also includes the National Art Library (books and photographs on Art and allied subjects); the National Collections of Post-Classical Sculpture, of British Miniatures, and of Water-Colours; and the National Lantern Slide Loan Collection.

The Museum Galleries, for the first time in their history, are now being rearranged in two distinct, but equally important, groups. The *Primary Collections* (specially arranged in newly decorated galleries and mostly on the ground floor) will show the visitor a connected series of galleries in which masterpieces of all the arts are brought together by style, period or nationality, i.e., Early Mediaeval; Gothic; Renaissance; English 1500-1850; Continental, 1570-1825, Islamic; Far East; Indian (in the Indian Section). The *Secondary* or *Study Collections*, are arranged according to the material or class of object.

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The Museum also administers Ham House and the Bethnal Green Museum.

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IN THE DAYS OF THE JANISSARIES

By Alexander Pallis. *Hutchinson.* 18s.

Reviewed by C. M. Woodhouse

Not the least unusual thing about Mr. Pallis's unusual book on seventeenth-century Turkey is that the writer is a Greek who has enjoyed the full rigours of an English classical education. Those who survive an English classical education at all generally emerge as fanatical phil-hellenes, often convinced that the Hellenism to which they are so devoted came to an end with the death of Alexander the Great. A Greek passing through the same austere experience might be forgiven for sharing the first prejudice, even in an exaggerated form; but in place of the second prejudice he might be expected to cherish his people's national tradition that the greatest age of Greek, Middle Eastern, or any history was the age of the Byzantine Empire. From either point of view, whether the classical phil-hellene or the Greek patriot, there is nothing whatever to be said for the Turk. He is merely the barbarian marauder from Asia who destroyed the Byzantine Empire and all but blotted out from the memory of the Greeks that they still held 'the letters Cadmus gave'. But that is not the picture Mr. Pallis sees. He is a scholar, and he might almost be called a Turcophile.

The peg on which he has chosen to hang his engaging study of Turkish life at the height of the Ottoman Empire is a collection of reminiscences by a Turkish traveller called Evliyá Chelebí, who served as a page at the Sultan's court during the second quarter of the seventeenth century, and subsequently undertook a number of official and private travels in the Empire and abroad. Even Mr. Pallis's scrupulous fairness cannot conceal that Evliyá was a bore with meagre talent for writing: the nearest approach to Greek prejudice in the book is perhaps Mr. Pallis's slightly unfavourable comparison of Evliyá with Herodotus, which is nevertheless put a great deal more mildly than the average English phil-hellene would have put it. So concerned is Mr. Pallis to present the great days of the Ottoman Empire in the most attractive light that he entirely excludes from his selection of 'the most interesting and picturesque passages', all those referring to Evliyá's journeys in the Greek-inhabited areas of the Empire. Perhaps these are to be reserved for another volume; if so, it may well prove even more interesting to English readers than the account of Turkish life in and around the capital which Mr. Pallis has here extracted.

Extraction was needed, and even after careful and selective editing, Evliyá's work still has the scrappy character of the original. 'The book is a mere jumble of notes, thrown together without any system or method,' as its editor admits. His method has been to arrange consecutively a number of passages bearing on interesting aspects of Turkish life—the Seraglio, the Guilds, the arts and sports of the capital, and so on—with a sympathetic commentary of his own, to which a special flavour is added by the wide and admirable selection of illustrations. These perhaps deserve a commentary on their own even more than Evliyá, for many of them also are here published for the first time. One of the few complaints that might be brought against Mr. Pallis's editorship is that the commentary does not sufficiently weave together the text and the illustrations into a composite picture of the little-known way of life which both separately illustrate. There are almost too many fascinating threads hanging on the peg, and too many of them are loose ends.

An instance of exceptional interest in its own right is the story of the Serpent Column in the Hippodrome at Constantinople, which was originally set up at Delphi to celebrate Greece's victory in 479 B.C. over the Turks' Asiatic predecessors, the Persians under Xerxes. Transferred by Constantine to his new capital, it was subsequently mutilated in an act of exhibitionism by an Ottoman Sultan, who broke the head of one of the three serpents twined in the column. But which Sultan was it? Gibbon says Mahomet the Conqueror (Mehmét II, in 1453). Evliyá says Selím the Sot (Selím II, over a century later). Mr. Pallis, though scolding Evliyá for faulty chronology, offers no opinion and seems little interested in the fascinating episode. He includes a charming plate illustrating the incident, but his text gives the wrong reference to it, and he makes no

comment on the light that it might shed on the story—which is possibly great, for in the illustration the column still has three heads, and today it has none. One of the reasons why Evliyá was no Herodotus was that he had no curiosity about the truth of such episodes. It is a little disappointing that his editor has been so thoroughly self-effacing in leaving Evliyá to speak for himslf, instead of supplying his deficiencies with more critical ruthlessness. But the impeccable fairness of his scholarship only stands out the more sharply for the disappointment.

THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT: BASIC DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS

By R. G. Dixon and Elmer Plischke.
New York: *Van Nostrand.* London: *Macmillan.* 27s.

Reviewed by Max Beloff

American teachers of politics are nothing if not thorough, and they are rightly aware that politics is apt to become a highly abstract subject. This volume is therefore intended to perform for the study of the American political and administrative system the same service as atlases and travel-photographs do for the geographer. Apart from the usual and useful maps, statistical tables, diagrams and administrative charts, it includes reproductions of a very large number of official documents, varying in range and importance from the Mayflower Compact and the Declaration of Independence to Writs of Habeas Corpus, Subpœnas and Deportation Warrants. It is a salutary reminder of what the modern government can produce in the way of forms. For the non-American reader, the most useful section may well be that on elections where all the bewildering varieties of ballots and voting-machines are fully illustrated. If you have been baffled by the 'open primary' or the rôle of Presidential electors, here is your chance to get up to date before the next great jamboree in 1952. A useful book to have around when Alistair Cooke or someone of that kind is on the air.

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A GAME OF HIDE AND SEEK By Elizabeth Taylor. *Peter Davies.* 9s. 6d.

COUSIN CHARLES By Camilla Tracy. *Duckworth.* 9s. 6d.

VESPA By Kitty Barne. *Chapman & Hall.* 10s. 6d.

RANDALL AND THE RIVER OF TIME By C. M. S. Forester. *Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.

Reviewed by Stevie Smith

Mr. Powell's sense of humour is very subtle and peculiar—it has a sideways movement, sidling up like an old crab nipping sharply: rather slow. This new novel after ten years is mostly about Jenkins. At first Jenkins is at school with his dear friends, the rich child Templer, the better-born Stringham. In and out of their lives pads the awkward boy Widmerspool, doing high-minded things in an aggravating way and wearing the wrong clothes. Oh, what men of the world are these three friends, especially when that sad character, Jenkins's Uncle Giles, slinks in at the study door smoking the cigarette that is going to take a good deal of explaining away, boring the cynical children with his financial predicament and his feelings about the villainous Trust that keeps him so short. It was de Quincey who first noticed how splendidly Etonians can handle this sort of thing. There is something perhaps *more* boyish in the way they deliver Le Bas, that dangerous lunatic of a Housemaster, with his habit of performing gymnastics at unsuitable moments, into the hands of the police. Jenkins is a calm-eyed child who will always see everything that is going on and watch and be amused (and be amusing too since it is Mr. Powell who is speaking through him) but he will never tell his mind. In the French boarding-house for students he smiles as the conceited Frenchman harangues; at the University he visits the outrageous snobbish don and observes how determined the toadies are not to take offence; in the social life he finds the Templers hung with City gold, rather vulgar and keeping odd company (Sunny Farebrother is very good, Peter Templer, true to Etonian promise, seduces Lady McReith in fits of immoderate laughter). Stringham's mother, with landed gold, is not vulgar at all but wild and beautiful. This book is only the opening chapters in the life of this formidable and lazy Jenkins, so bland, so hidden. There is nobody in it who is likable except Jenkins himself. One likes that gaping and dawdling. What will happen to him now?

A true blue chip of a publisher's investment, if it is not positively gilt-edged, is Miss Enid Bagnold's new novel—there is so much in it that will appeal to tired readers, so much easy entertainment, so much that takes the mind off. Oh, how fallen and changed she is from the author of *Serena Blandish*, that accomplished early novel, so witty and light-handed, that yet had undertones satisfying to the inquiring mind. *The Loved and Envied* is about ageing ladies living in Paris and London, and some of them come from Jamaica and go to and fro. And it is about their ageing lovers and the young girls the ladies once were and about their own young girls, and about the beauty treatments and the smart dresses and Time treading on the guarded cheek. Ruby Maclean is fifty-three and is loved and envied because she is still so charming. But her young daughter is a solemn girl and when she has married an adventurer, she will not speak to him; can you imagine what it is, she says, to be an obstinate girl? (this is good). Ruby was brought up as an orphan child by her aunt; this lady had a fearful facial disfigurement which drove her into the sickening beauty trade; she made a fortune and took to drink. The rich aristocratic

man marries his cook but keeps her in her place; she learns she may not dine with her husband (good again). These shifting pictures are bright to look at but they are tiring too for the elevated reader. The coarsened mind clutches courageously at what should be the book's true theme—loneliness and the lengths people will go to not to be lonely—but cannot grapple with it. Here is some of the writing: 'Two more acts and the play, having reached its climax, diminuendoed . . . Rudi Holbein . . . hallucinated by the culminatory moment . . . ' And again, 'With his head still tilted he looked at her down his cheek with his red-brown eyes. It was his big sex-look.' Sad stuff, is it not?

Signor Marotta writes from deep feelings about himself and his family and about Naples. The feelings are partly love and partly hatred. He truly loved his mother and he does his best to give a true picture of this brave lady. . . . 'You can never do justice to a woman. In any case she was a good mother, a mother of the kind I would go to hell for, gladly.' This is a good example of the flippancy with which he chooses, I think unwisely, to mask his feelings. When his father died, the rich relatives would do nothing to help his mother and the three children and so they sank into that peculiar Neapolitan poverty of noble stones and dire interiors which it is his wish and pleasure to describe. But first his mother worked in the house of a selfish, rich, vicious man until he made advances to the young Giuseppe. He writes well about graveyards and funerals. 'Death,' he says, 'is truly the most ancient citizen of Naples. At every step he seems to say: "You must pay me for the pleasure of having lived here instead of somewhere else".' There is something distasteful about Signor Marotta's humour, something in it of the sly coyness one finds more often in the German than in the Italian writers. There is danger, too, in making the rich bad and the poor good, and often Signor Marotta is sentimental because of doing this.

Miss Elizabeth Taylor has been singled out for great praise and indeed she does write very well—but no better than several ladies whose names are less garlanded with bays. These ladies, and I propose to list a few of their books below—are the women

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writers who see life in terms of the daily domestic round, the children and the washing-up and the clock ticking in the hall . . . that is very far from being Sterne's lascivious timepiece. Harriet is the heroine of *A Game of Hide and Seek*; she is a sensitive young girl who falls in love with Vesey. They are about eighteen. Vesey is one of those emotionally incapable young men women seem to like to write about. They are poor material for the loving heart that should do well to keep away from them if it does not wish to be trampled on. It begins to be tiresome already, this hopeless affection the girls feel. How unhappy everybody is in this book! There is Harriet's mother Lilian and Vesey's Aunt Constance; they are high-principled educated ladies who fought for women's suffrage. They are as dried up as little black peas and their husbands are wretched in their hands, if they are not happy enough to be dead. Vesey's mother early set her son on unhappy paths. 'After her day's work, while she bathed, he brought her drinks, carried messages to and from the telephone. In later years "mother" brought to his mind the steamy bathroom, the picture of her creamy-yellow body with its almost navy-blue hair, the hands and feet with their darkly-varnished nails. This was the only time he was alone with her.' Harriet marries Charles and their little daughter Betsy is a very fine picture of a fifteen-year-old-schoolgirl in love with the Classics mistress, which perhaps accounts for her proficiency in Greek—she is already reading Homer as well as Xenophon. Miss Taylor owes much to Miss Elizabeth Bowen . . . even going so far as to say 'Ivy hit the pane.'

Cousin Charles by Camilla Tracy—in which the hapless love of a tender girl for her aggravating cousin is further complicated by the fact that there are landed possessions to which both have a claim. There is wit in this riddle of inheritance and inherited maladjustments, and the writing is sharp.

Vespa by Kitty Barne. Excellent again in her feminine talent—quite as good as Miss Taylor's and much more agreeable—is Miss Barne in her amusing story of Vespa, called after a wasp by her father, an entomologist. Here the young girl is in love with mother's flame, an American manfully acclimatising himself to British home life. There is a scene in a holiday camp on the east coast in inclement weather as winter draws on, which is a real collector's piece of uncomfortable memory.

Randall and the River of Time starts with young Randall asleep on his chicken wire bed in the company headquarters dug-out. He is nineteen. He is in the middle of the icy muddy hell of the First World War. There is a touch of genius, something truly Homeric, about Mr. Forester's fighting scenes; again it is the frozen mud of Scamander plain, a war's first impetus lost in the mere habit of going on, the sense of futility, of youth being spent out, of commanders' squabbles, and above it all is this heroic habitual obstinacy, fatally see-sawing on two sides equally matched. Randall, as well as being a good officer, is also a good inventor. He has an idea for perfecting that faulty flare which at present only manages to light up the British lines instead of the enemy's. Back comes the brave boy Randall on Blighty leave, back to the London of 1917, snatching at the bright pleasures, the comfortable home, the theatre, that dinner at the Savoy with the sympathetic girl, the champagne. The waiters are very tactful; the guilty-feeling older civilian tells the child from hell, who is also a child from the suburbs, what tip he should give. It is extremely well done, this part of the book. But now the war is over and the sympathetic girl is merely Muriel the harpy who tricked him into marriage. After this the story is much what we should expect. Harpy-girl surprised by husband in bed with lover; death of lover, hopping one-legged to the window and falling out on his head; trial of husband on murder charge, clever K.C. defending; acquittal; and in the end Randall feeling very bitter, thinking he will emigrate to America. Mr. Forester handles all this admirably: he cannot but tell a good story. But jog-trotting at this lower level, we remember former fighting flights. His heart was with Randall in France.

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